In Sports: Apaches welcome in one of state's best players. **Page B1**

Wabash Plain Dealer

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Pulse of Wabash

Wabash Plain Dealer's new website now available

Check out our new website at www.wabashplaindealer.com and let us know what you think. If you had an account on our previous site, you will need to create a new account. If you registered with the same email address we will be able to locate your previous subscription as well. Once registered, you can also verify your subscription. Please contact web support@wabashplaindealer.com with any questions. Thank you!

Wabash Plain Dealer's new office now open

The Wabash Plain Dealer's new office is now open on the second floor at 99 W. Canal St.

Manchester hosts Polar Plunge to aid Special Olympics

Manchester invites residents of Wabash and Kosciusko counties to Freezin' for a Reason on Saturday, Feb. 22 outside the Physical Education and Recreation Center (PERC). Team members can sign up as participants, which means they jump in the water, or "virtual plungers," who raise money but do not get wet. To register, visit https://www.firstgiving.com/event/soindiana/Polar-Plunge-North-Manchester. Events begin at 10 a.m. with sign-ups and welcome, followed by costume judging at noon. The water portion is 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., with the After-Splash Bash lunch at 1:30 p.m.

Manchester Civic Band looking for new members

A callout meeting has been planned for 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26 at the Manchester High School band room through the double doors at the southeast corner of the building. Practices are held beginning at 7 p.m. and ending at either 8:30 or 9 p.m. Wednesdays in the Manchester High School Band Room.

MSD to host community presentation Feb. 27

MSD of Wabash County will be hosting a Community Presentation to share updates on their Strategic Plan at 7 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27 at Southwood Jr./Sr. High School, 564 Indiana 124.

Somerset Lions Club to hold euchre event

The Somerset Lions Club is set to host a euchre event Saturday, Feb. 29 in the Somerset Community Building. The entry fee is $10. Registration is from 1 to 1:45 p.m. Play begins at 2 p.m. There will be cash prizes for Most Loners, Highest Score, Second Highest Score, 50-50 Drawing and two drawings for the entry fee. Soft drinks, hot dogs, cookies and chips will be available for a donation. Proceeds will support Somerset projects.

See **PULSE**, page A6

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Jail overcrowding a common problem in state

County was taking preliminary steps to develop a new site even before ACLU lawsuit

By ROB BURGESS
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

Though Wabash County's jail overpopulation problem has been longstanding and severe, many other counties throughout the state have struggled with the same issues.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Indiana filed a lawsuit Wednesday on behalf of individuals incarcerated at Wabash County Jail. The class-action suit was filed Wednesday in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana South Bend Division on behalf of Wabash County Jail inmates Jerry Copeland, John Whitt and James Dutton against Wabash County and Baker. Attorneys for the plaintiffs and the putative class are Stevie J. Pactor and Kenneth J. Falk of the ACLU of Indiana.

The complaint claims the Wabash facility is "overcrowded and understaffed, resulting in dangerous, unconstitutional conditions in the jail."

In 2018, an evaluation by the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute found 77 percent of Indiana's jails to be overcrowded or at capacity, according to Ariella Sult,

See **OVERCROWDING**, page A4

Photos by Leeann Doerflein / ldoerflein@chronicle-tribune.net

Cathy Weatherspoon, left, and Riley Tangeman, center, listen as Jonesboro Mayor Bob McNutt speaks about solutions and problems in Grant County during a small group session.

Sociologist dispels myths, offers strategies to improve rural housing

By LEEANN DOERFLEIN
ldoerflein@chronicle-tribune.com

Leaders from around Indiana gathered at Ivy Tech Marion to hear statistics behind housing issues facing rural communities on Tuesday.

The Community Foundation of Grant County invited sociologist Ben Winchester, senior research fellow with Minnesota Extension Center for Vitality, to share statistics and guide local officials toward solutions.

Winchester's talk centered around the alleged myth that there is not enough working class housing in rural communities. Winchester said this is a myth because in a lot of cases rural houses are just dilapidated or occupied too long by elderly residents.

During the next 20 years, he said rural communities must be prepared to welcome a new generation of residents, as about

See **HOUSING**, page A2

Leaders from around Indiana gather together to think of ways to improve their community.

Indiana DNR hiring new officers

Completion of pre-screening test by midnight Friday, Feb. 28 required

By STAFF REPORT

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Law Enforcement is looking to fill Indiana Conservation Officer (ICO) positions across the state with highly motivated, outdoor-centered individuals, according to a press release.

Anyone interested in a career as an ICO should first read "Becoming a Conservation Officer" at dnr.IN.gov/lawenfor and complete the pre-screening test at dnr.IN.gov/lawenfor/9801.htm.

Completion of the pre-screening test by midnight Friday, Feb. 28 is required to be considered for the 2020 hiring process, which starts in early March.

To be qualified to pass the pre-screening test, you must be a U.S. citizen; be 21 years old by April 16, 2021; and have an associate degree from an accredited college or completed 60 hours toward a bachelor's degree, or have four years full-time active military service with an honorable discharge by Sept. 21. You must be able to pass the minimum Indiana Law Enforcement Academy physical fitness requirements as listed at ilea.IN.gov/2338.htm.

Conservation officers comprise Indiana's oldest state law enforcement agency. ICOs are fully recognized Indiana police officers who enforce and uphold all DNR rules and regulations as well as all other Indiana state laws. ICOs spend the majority of their time enforcing fishing and hunting regulations, conducting marine boat patrol on Indiana's waterways, and patrolling DNR properties to keep them safe and family-friendly.

In addition to traditional law enforcement work, ICOs also engage in specialty areas, including scuba, K-9, search and rescue, swift water rescue and more.

NIPSCO encourages local nonprofits to apply for grant

Environmental Action Grant is now in its fifth year

By STAFF REPORT

NIPSCO is accepting applications for its environmental action grant to support local nonprofit organizations with environmental initiatives, according to a press release.

In its fifth year, NIPSCO's Environmental Action Grant aims to provide funding for restoration and education projects throughout northern Indiana.

Recipients in recent years have included environmental groups, community groups, schools and other nonprofit organizations.

In 2019, the grant funded 15 projects with a total of $50,000, the release said. Projects included habitat, shoreline, pond and wetland restoration; outdoor and environmental education; native seed planting; and more.

Grants are available in the amount of $500 to $5,000 for organizations seeking funds for environmental restoration projects and education programs. Applications will be accepted through April 3 with grant awards announced the week of Earth Day, April 22.

Nonprofit organizations with an environmental restoration or education project are invited to submit a grant request through NIPSCO's online request portal at NIPSCO.com/Community. Applicants are to select the "Environmental Stewardship" option in the Area of Impact drop-down box on the application.

Applications should include a project description, timeline and evaluation.

Creating opportunities for volunteerism is an important part of the grant, in addition to providing monetary support to the organization, the release said.

Eligible organizations must be a 501(c)(3) or other nonprofit, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service, with an environmental project focus, and have a direct impact in the NIPSCO service area.

Visit Wabash County announces Margie Hostetler's retirement

Retirement party planned from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28

By STAFF REPORT

Visit Wabash County announced that Margie Hostetler, Visitor Services, will be retiring at the end of the month, according to a press release.

Visit Wabash County has invited the public to stop and to wish Hostetler a happy retirement between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28 at the Visit Wabash County Welcome Center, 221 S. Miami St.

"Hostetler has been an integral part of growing the merchants and artisans featured from Wabash County in the Welcome Center to well over 30," stated the release. "Retail sales have also increased over the past three and a half years because of Hostetler's attention to detail and knack for keeping merchandise fresh."

Provided photo

Visit Wabash County has invited the public to stop and to wish Hostetler a happy retirement between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28 at the Visit Wabash County Welcome Center, 221 S. Miami St.

Her other responsibilities included greeting and assisting visitors, visitor guide distribution, rotating window displays, uploading events to the website, as well as many other tasks.

"Margie has served Visit Wabash County with dedication and great care for the last three and a half years," stated Christine Flohr, executive director of tourism. "I wish her all the happiness and enjoyment that retirement can bring. I will miss her greatly."

During her time, Hostetler has also planned and executed three Wabash County artist receptions that honored new pieces painted by Terry Pulley, Susan Ring and Erika Ford. Prints of each exclusive piece of artwork are for sale in the Welcome Center.

"I have enjoyed meeting and building relationships with people throughout Wabash County, as well as visitors across the US and from other countries," stated Hostetler. "Working with the staff at Visit Wabash County has offered many valuable experiences that I will always cherish. What a fun place to work! I am looking forward to spending time with my husband through our ministry at Faith Harvest Fellowship, as well as gardening, and being with family."

Intel officials say Russia boosting Trump candidacy

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and MICHAEL BALSAMO
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Intelligence officials have warned lawmakers that Russia is interfering in the 2020 election campaign to help President Donald Trump get reelected, according to three officials familiar with the closed-door briefing.

Trump pushed back Friday accusing Democrats of launching a disinformation campaign.

"Another misinformation campaign is being launched by Democrats in Congress saying that Russia prefers me to any of the Do Nothing Democrat candidates who still have been unable to, after two weeks, count their votes in Iowa. Hoax number 7!" Trump tweeted.

The officials, who asked for anonymity to discuss sensitive intelligence, said Thursday that the briefing last week focused on Russia's efforts to influence the 2020 election and sow discord in the American electorate. The intelligence warning was first reported by The New York Times and The Washington Post.

A senior administration official told The Associated Press that the news infuriated Trump, who complained that Democrats would use the information against him. Over the course of his presidency, Trump has dismissed the intelligence community's assessment of Russia's 2016 election interference as a conspiracy to undermine his victory. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe the private meeting.

A day after the Feb. 13 briefing to the House committee, Trump berated the then-director of national intelligence, Joseph Maguire, and he announced this week that Maguire would be replaced by Richard Grenell, a Trump loyalist.

Moscow denied any meddling. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday that the allegations are "paranoid reports that, unfortunately, there will be more and more of as we get closer to the elections (in the U.S.). Of course, they have nothing to do with the truth."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi tweeted that, "American voters should decide American elections – not Vladimir Putin." She added that all members of Congress "should condemn the President's reported efforts to dismiss threats to the integrity of our democracy & to politicize our intel community."

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., the chairman of the House intelligence committee, tweeted: "We count on the intelligence community to inform Congress of any threat of foreign interference in our elections. If reports are true and the President is interfering with that, he is again jeopardizing our efforts to stop foreign meddling. Exactly as we warned he would do."

U.S. intelligence agencies say Russia interfered in the 2016 election through social media campaigns and stealing and distributing emails from Democratic accounts. They say Russia was trying to boost Trump's campaign and add chaos to the American political process. Special counsel Robert Mueller concluded that Russian interference was "sweeping and systematic," but he did not find a criminal conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign.

Republican lawmakers who were in last week's briefing by the DNI's chief election official, Shelby Pierson, pushed back by noting that Trump has been tough on Russia, one of the officials said.

While Trump has imposed severe economic sanctions on Russia, he also has spoken warmly of Russian leader Vladimir Putin and withdrawn troops from areas, like Syria, where Moscow could fill the vacuum. He delayed military aid last year to Ukraine, a Russian adversary – a decision that was at the core of his impeachment proceedings.

The Times said Trump was angry that the House briefing was made before Schiff, the panel's chairman, who led the impeachment proceedings.

Trump on Thursday formally appointed Grenell, the U.S. ambassador to Germany, to replace Maguire as the new acting director of national intelligence. Maguire was required to step down soon under federal law governing acting appointments. The Times cited two administration officials as saying the timing, after the intelligence briefing, was coincidental.

Grenell's background is primarily in politics and media affairs. He lacks the extensive national security and military experience of Maguire, as well as previous holders of the position overseeing the nation's 17 intelligence agencies.

His appointment does little to heal the president's fraught relations with the intelligence community, which Trump has derided as part of a "deep state" of entrenched bureaucrats that seek to undermine his agenda. The administration has most notably feuded with the intelligence community over the Russian interference and the events surrounding Trump's impeachment.

Pierson told NPR in an interview that aired last month that the Russians "are already engaging in influence operations relative to candidates going into 2020. But we do not have evidence at this time that our adversaries are directly looking at interfering with vote counts or the vote tallies."

HOUSING

From page A1

three-quarters of owner-occupied housing will become available. Winchester foresees this trend because about 77 percent of homes in rural communities are owned by seniors and baby boomers.

Based on those coming into and leaving rural communities for work each day, Winchester said the greatest opportunity is those "moving over," since about 11,000 people leave or come into Marion for work. While many may want to "move over" to communities like Marion, the obstacle becomes if there is available housing for seniors and for working families.

While there is no silver bullet, leaders who attended were encouraged to expand the conversation about housing in their community and rebuild the model of housing demand to create the housing stock needed to grow rural communities.

"Opening senior housing is one and the same as opening up other housing," Winchester said.

Leaders were encouraged to capitalize on programs to make seniors' homes more valuable before they have to leave, such as a grant or loan program.

Winchester said his data indicates that seniors are living alone longer and are more reluctant to leave their home near the end of their life. So, another narrative to rewrite is how seniors look at their home. Some seniors have the idea that their house will sit vacant when they move out or pass away.

"It was a home to you. It was a home to someone before you. It will be a home to people after you," Winchester said.

Winchester encouraged families to be proactive and get on the same page about the future of their home to avoid emergency end of life situations and situations that could cause the house to fall into disrepair.

The talk was followed by break-out sessions where attendees talked about what is working now, what could work better and what should or could be developed to attract, retain and plan for new residents.

In one session, participants said what is working well in Grant County right now is the economy and always getting new talent to see the community when they attend the local universities.

Some opportunity areas participants found were providing young professionals with opportunities to get involved outside the office and increasing public transportation to make the community more accessible during more hours of the day.

"Your community has to be someplace people want to live, not just a place where your job is," said Brad Bishop, a businessman from Warsaw.

"A challenge is lack of diversity age-wise," said Marion young professional Riley Tangeman. "It can make it challenging to stay here because it makes you question if this is the right place for you or why you are taking the hard route."

One of the biggest changes that Marion needs may be an attitude adjustment, according to some participants.

"There's a lot of people in Grant County that believe we are less than OK," said Pam Leslie of Marion. "When you talk one-on-one to people they say these things. But I wonder how so many amazing people live and work here and feel this way?"

For more coverage of Winchester's presentation, check out the Feb. 18 edition of the Chronicle-Tribune. Follow Leeann on Twitter @leeanndoerflein

THE ROXY MOVIE THEATER

Roxy 5 Showtimes for Friday, February 21– Thursday, February 27
All showtimes have Closed Captioning available.

The Call of the Wild (PG)
Fri: 6:40, 9:15
Sat: 1:00, 3:55, 6:40, 9:15
Sun: 1:00, 3:35, 6:40
Mon - Thurs: 6:40

Sonic the Hedgehog (PG)
Fri: 6:20, 9:05
Sat: 1:10, 3:45, 6:20, 9:05
Sun: 1:10, 3:45, 6:20
Mon - Thurs: 6:20

1917 (R)
Fri: 7:00, 9:35
Sat: 1:30, 4:05, 7:00, 9:35
Sun: 1:30, 4:05, 7:00
Mon - Thurs: 7:00

Downhill (R)
Fri: 9:45
Sat: 4:15, 9:45
Sun: 1:40, 6:50
Mon - Thurs: 6:50

Birds of Prey (R)
Fri: 6:35, 9:25
Sat: 1:20, 3:55, 6:35, 9:25
Sun: 1:20, 3:55, 6:35
Mon - Thurs: 6:35

Dolittle (PG)
Fri: 6:50
Sat: 1:40, 6:50
Sun: 4:15

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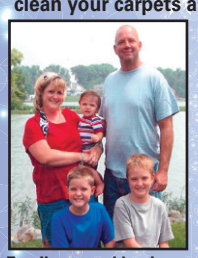
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5-Day Weather Summary

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Rain Likely	Scattered Rain	Scattered Snow
45 / 31	49 / 39	43 / 35	40 / 32	34 / 22

Sun and Moon

Today's sunset ..... 6:30 p.m.
Tomorrow's sunrise ..... 7:31 a.m.

New	First	Full	Last
2/23	3/2	3/9	3/16

Detailed Local Outlook

Today we will see sunny skies, high temperature of 45°, humidity of 48%. South southwest wind 10 to 14 mph. Expect mostly clear skies tonight, overnight low of 31°. South southwest wind 10 mph. The wind chill for tonight could reach 23°. Sunday, skies will be partly cloudy, high of 49°, humidity of 64%.

Reader wants to be sensitive to gender identity

Harriette Cole
Sense & Sensitivity

DEAR HARRIETTE: I am finding myself at a loss for how to be politically correct when it comes to talking about gender identity. My neighbor's child – who was born female – says that she now identifies as "they." I do my best to remember, but it doesn't come natural to me yet.

Beyond that, I see that the language is changing a lot, and I am totally lost. It used to be that people were gay or straight. Now it's LGBTQ. Or non-binary conforming – but what does that mean? I don't want to sound dumb or outdated, but I honestly don't understand the new realm of gender identity, let alone how to talk about it. Can you help? – Gender Confusion

DEAR GENDER CONFUSION: At least part of the culture in which we live today is making a concerted effort to be more welcoming of all people, and that includes people who do not conform to the standard definitions of gender identity. For many, this occurs when family members or friends present themselves in ways that do not follow the traditional definitions of "male" or "female." When loved ones actively claim other ways of defining themselves, those they love often make an effort to support them. This is true even for conservative people who may grapple with their own value systems when it comes to gender identity.

How one defines oneself when the language has been limited to male and female can be a daunting task. It is one that folks have struggled with for generations. I am no expert, but I do know that there is a lot of literature out there that can be supportive. To the point of non-binary, my understanding is that if someone is not comfortable with being singularly either male or female, the person is considered non-binary. The next choices are broadening.

LGBTQ is an acronym that helps some. It means lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer, and it serves as a general category outside of the male/female, straight/homosexual buckets. There is also a movement for people to claim their pronouns – he, she or they – in an effort to further define how one identifies.

You should read up on this topic. But if you approach people with respect and openness, you are off to a good start. If you get the label wrong but your intention is good, chances are, you will be able to expand your vocabulary simply by asking for clarification.

For more details, visit bit.ly/2v9ADFn or bit.ly/2S4cn0o. Activist Jodie Patterson, a mother of five with a trans child, wrote a book, "The Bold World: A Memoir of Family and Transformation" that can be very helpful.

DEAR HARRIETTE: My girlfriend loves to wear makeup, and she usually wears bright red lipstick. It looks great on her, and I appreciate the fact that she likes to dress up. What I don't like is when her lipstick gets on my clothes. It makes me crazy. How can I get her to lay off the red lipstick? She has destroyed several of my favorite shirts just by reaching up to give me a kiss. I don't want to hurt her feelings, but something's got to give. – No More Lipstick Stains

DEAR NO MORE LIPSTICK STAINS: Surprise your girlfriend and go to the makeup store and buy her some 24-hour matte red lipstick. Believe it or not, she will still be able to wear red literally all day long, but it won't wipe off. You should tell her why you bought it so that she herself will make the switch to the 18- or 24-hour variety.

Harriette Cole is a lifestylist and founder of DREAMLEAPERS, an initiative to help people access and activate their dreams. You can send questions to askharriette@harriettecole.com or c/o Andrews McMeel Syndication, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO 64106.

READERS' CHOICE REPORTS

THURSDAY'S LOTTERIES

Cash 5
15-24-33-40-42
Estimated jackpot: $336,500
Cash4Life
03-09-25-46-49, Cash Ball: 1
Daily Three-Midday
6-7-3, SB: 4
Daily Three-Evening
8-9-9, SB:
Daily Four-Midday
3-3-0-9, SB: 4
Daily Four-Evening
3-9-2-2, SB:
Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: $50 million
Powerball
Estimated jackpot: $60 million

FRIDAY'S METALS

Aluminum	.77
Copper	2.60
Lead	.88
Zinc	.95
Gold	1,647.13
Silver	18.57
Platinum	976.16

AREA GRAIN

Estimated grain prices Friday at Indianapolis-area elevators: Corn: $3.96. Soy beans: $8.82.

Wabash Plain Dealer
99 W. Canal St.
Wabash, Ind. 46992

VOL. 162 NO. 38

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Circulation

■ **Customer Service**
Telephone Hours:
260-563-2131
Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday,
8 a.m. - 11 a.m.

■ **Office Hours:**
Monday-Friday:
9 a.m. - noon; 1 - 5 p.m.

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■ **Home delivery subscription rates:** Daily, 13 weeks, $59.50. EZ-Pay, monthly, $18.65. Other payment options available by calling Subscriber Services at 260-563-2131.

POSTMASTER: Send address change to Wabash Plain Dealer, 99 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

■ There will be a $10 early termination fee to cancel an existing subscription prior to expiration date.

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■ **Office Hours:**
Monday-Friday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
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Friday-Sunday:
Hours vary

■ **Call:** 260-563-2131

■ **Email:** news@wabashplaindealer.com

(Please call in advance of your visit.)

USPS 663-940

Wabash Plain Dealer established September 1858

Published Tuesdays through Saturdays (except on postal holidays) by Paxton Media Group, by the Wabash Plain Dealer, 99 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992. Periodical postage paid at Wabash, Ind.

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Community

'It's all history now'

On this day in 1909, the Wabash Elks Club entertained George Mullin with an evening of dining, dancing and celebratory speeches, all in honor of their lodge brother who was about to leave for spring training with the Detroit Tigers. Mullin, who lived on North Cass Street, was about to begin his eighth season as a starting pitcher for Detroit.

Pete Jones

Mullin would soon join his teammates in San Antonio, Texas, where the Tigers had their training camp. Word was that Mullin was about to change his pitching style, and no one was happier about that than Charley Schmidt, who was Detroit's first-string catcher.

Mullin had a reputation as being a "tortoise" on the mound. That is, he waited a long time between pitches. He would talk to himself or to the batter, hoping to unnerve his opponent. But Schmidt believed that this allowed the hitter time to relax and settle into the batter's box. Even though Mullin took his time on the mound, he was known for hurling a wicked fastball.

The change in style must have worked because Mullin led the American League with 29 wins the next season. That was a Tiger record until 1963 when Denny McLain recorded 31 wins.

Drug stores

In 1867 many Wabash merchants stocked nearly any item of merchandise that they thought might sell. For example, one jeweler in town sold wallpaper and ladders as well as diamonds and watches and at least two grocery stores sold kerosene.

But perhaps the champion merchandisers in town were the druggists, who sold an amazing variety of goods. In a large display ad in the Plain Dealer, Dr. James Ford, who owned a drug store on Wabash Street, offered for sale such items as paints, varnishes, wallpaper, books and vinegar.

Dr. Ford also sold school books, putty and glazier tools as well as coal oil and a host of lamps that burned the fuel.

Two of Ford's competitors offered equally diverse lists of merchandise. Murray and Stone's store had a wide inventory of spices something not advertised by other druggists.

Gordon and Thurston's drug store carried much the same lines of merchandise as did the other pharmacies, but it sold silverware and musical instruments as well.

All of the drug stores filled prescriptions ordered by the town's physicians, but they sold dozens of over-the-counter patent medicines which were perhaps overly popular.

Among the patent medicines of the day was a preparation known as Dr. Maggiel's Pills. An advertisement in the Plain Dealer claimed that the wondrous pills could cure a multitude of diseases including asthma, colds, fever and ague, headache, influenza, liver complains, lowness of spirits, ringworm and rheumatism, and this is only half the list.

The company that produced them was on Fulton Street in lower Manhattan, and it was owned by a man named Haydock, who was not a physician.

The concoction known as Dr. Maggiel's Pills was just one of the hundreds if not thousands of nostrums peddled by druggists and others during the half-century or so that was known as "The Golden Age of Quackery." Display advertisements in the newspapers from about 1850 to the end of the 19th century are filled with boasts and wild and reckless claims of what an array of pills, salves and gadgets could do to improve health and cure all manner of diseases. All that began to diminish with the passage of the Food and Drug Act of 1906, which brought increased regulation and inspection to the field of over-the-counter medications.

Pete Jones writes a weekly column on local history for the Wabash Plain Dealer. He writes about people, places and events in and around Wabash County. Contact him by mail at 1160 Sunset Drive, Wabash, IN 46992 or by email at peteinwabash@comcast.net.

Provided photo

Pictured from left to right are: Carrie Vineyard, director of marketing for Gebhart Holdings; Dean Gogolewski, Wabash County YMCA CEO; Ben Gebhart, Gebhart Holdings CEO; Jay Driskill, Wabash County YMCA vice president of mission advancement; and Bill Barrows, director of sport and recreation for the Wabash County YMCA.

Gebhart Holdings supports the Wabash County YMCA

Community advocates essential for continued program enhancements

By STAFF REPORT

Gebhart Holdings recently donated to the Wabash County YMCA, according to a press release.

The donation will go towards future capital improvements to the wellness center as well as the enhancement of youth sports played both at the Field of Dreams and the Cass Street location.

"Our goal is to strengthen our community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility," stated Dean Gogolewski, CEO of the Wabash County YMCA. "The support that Gebhart Holdings, Inc. has provided will further this cause. We are thankful for their generosity to not only the YMCA but the youth of Wabash County."

The Wabash County YMCA relies on community advocates for continued program enhancements.

"Gebhart Holdings is committed to enriching the community around us and the YMCA is the perfect avenue to do just that. We are honored to be able to give in order to help support their mission," stated Ben Gebhart, CEO of Gebhart Holdings.

To learn about opportunities at the Wabash County YMCA, or to donate, email Jay Driskill at jdriskill@wabashcountyymca.org or visit wabashcountyymca.org.

Mom helps 2 men rescue truck driver days after giving birth

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — An Indiana woman who had given birth just a few days earlier said her instincts kicked in when she stopped along a highway to help save a driver who was on fire after his tanker truck loaded with jet fuel burst into flames.

Holly McNally, 35, had just left a hospital's neointensive care unit Thursday afternoon with her mother after they checked in on her son Connor, who was born Monday. They saw the overturned truck and flames along an Interstate 465 bridge that crosses over Interstate 70 on Indianapolis' far east side.

McNally said she slowed her car down and was stunned to see the 59-year-old driver on fire after he managed to get out of the truck on his own.

"People are videotaping and watching, but no one was going over there. So I told my mom 'I'm stopping, I'm going over there,'" McNally told WXIN-TV.

McNally, who has three other children, ages 8, 11 and 15, said that despite the risk to herself, she knew she had to help.

"I guess mom- and gut-instinct. If that were my child or my husband or my family member, I would want somebody to run up if they could," she told The Indianapolis Star.

Running toward the driver, McNally crossed paths with another man who was bringing a blanket to help extinguish the flames and cover the driver, whose clothes had burned off. As they began walking him away from the fire, an explosion rocked the overturned truck, which the driver told them was loaded with 4000 gallons of jet fuel.

"We started to go down the embankment a little bit, and I could smell the fluid running past my feet," McNally said. "I'm thinking I'm gonna blow up in an explosion, and not see my baby again."

A second explosion then caused the fire to spread and follow the three of them down the embankment. and the driver, who appeared to be in shock, began to slow down. Luckily, another man ran to the embankment and helped move the driver to safety.

"Without question, those good Samaritans saved this driver's life," Indiana State Police Sgt. John Perrine told The Indianapolis Star.

Another Indiana State Police trooper drove down the highway embankment to meet the three rescuers and the driver. He used clothing from his gym bag to cover the man until emergency medical technicians arrived, Indianapolis Fire Department Battalion Chief Rita Reith said.

The driver remained hospitalized in critical condition Friday morning, Reith said.

Trucking company Jet Star Inc. released a statement Friday, thanking those who helped save the driver, which it identified as Jeffrey "Duke" Denman.

"We are grateful that no one else was injured or involved. We would also like to offer a heartfelt 'thank you' to the brave 'Good Samaritan's' that rushed to aid our driver and help him escape from further harm," the company said, also thanking police, firefighters and public safety agencies that helped.

WEEKLY EVENTS

GriefShare support group meets Wednesdays

GriefShare grief recovery support group will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays at the Congregational Christian Church, 310 N. Walnut St., North Manchester. Participant workbooks can be purchased for $15. Scholarships are available. For more information or to register, call 260-982-2882.

AYC opens weekly after school program at a second location

Access Youth Center (AYC) has recently expanded to a second south side location for a weekly after school program. Food, games, homework help are available 5 to 6 p.m. Mondays at the main entrance of New Journey Church, formerly WC Mills School, 1721 N. Vernon St. It is a free program for students ages 8 to 18. Parents and guardians are also welcome.

Line Dance scheduled each Wednesday

Led by Sherry Wakefield at 8:45 a.m. every Wednesday, at Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. Dancing that is both fun and free. No fee, no registration, just fun.

Low Impact Fitness classes scheduled

Fitness that is both fun and free led by Mary Jo McClelland at 9:45 a.m. every Monday and Thursday, and 3 p.m. Wednesdays at Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. There is no fee or registration required.

Cancer care advocate available every Tuesday

A cancer care advocate is available from 1 to 4 p.m. every Tuesday at the Winchester Senior Center, 239 Bond St. No appointment is needed. This service is supported by the Hope Foundation and provided by Cancer Services out of Fort Wayne.

Yoga classes scheduled on Tuesdays

Yoga for those who are intermediate to experienced levels have been scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. The cost is $10, and discount passes are available.

DivorceCare to meet every Tuesday

DivorceCare, a 13-week DVD series sponsored by Wabash Friends Counseling Center, features some of the nation's foremost Christian experts on topics concerning divorce and recovery, according to a press release. The support group meets at 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday in Room 112 in the Wabash Friends Church, 3563 South State Road 13. Group leader and members of the group meet for dinner at 5:30 p.m. at Subway, 1812 S. Wabash St. on State Road 15. For more information, call 260-563-8453, 877-350-1658 or group leader Janet Quillen at 260-571-5235; email office@wabashfriends.org; or visit www.divorcecare.org.

Editor's note: If you have an upcoming event to submit, please send it by email to news@wabashplaindealer.com no later than five days before the event itself. Please use complete sentences, Associated Press style and Microsoft Word or PDF file formats.

OWN's 'Cherish the Day' is a rare celebration of black love

By LYNN ELBER
AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES — To separate filmmaker and TV producer Ava DuVernay's trenchant, history-driven projects, including "Selma" and "When They See Us," from her new romantic drama series is to sell short the determined thoughtfulness that shapes all her work.

OWN's intimate, eight-episode "Cherish the Day," which tracks a couple's relationship over five years, is superficially a far cry from DuVernay's accounts of African American struggles for civil rights and against injustice or even her first OWN series, the sprawling family saga "Queen Sugar."

But as DuVernay tells it, the love story (10 p.m. EST Tuesday) represents a bedrock truth.

"I'm constantly thinking about the things that are important to me, and trying to pinpoint and navigate my place in the world as a black woman and culturally," she said. "And black love is a radical part of the survival of black people, more important than ... the stories that make it in the history books, because love is the driver of all those things."

As examples, she invokes the devotion of Emmett Till's mother, who brought the teenager's 1955 lynching to the forefront, and the black community's embrace of Martin Luther King Jr.

Love allows "people who are oppressed to survive in a world that doesn't really love them, or show love to them," DuVernay said. "I'm always amazed by stories about the Holocaust ... the stories of whole families, fractured generations of people, who we know healed themselves through love."

Her perspective makes the genesis of "Cherish the Day," which launches OWN's first anthology series, less improbable: The Emmy-winning, Oscar-nominated "13th," an examination of racial inequality in the American prison system. As the documentary concludes, Common's song "Letter to the Free" plays over a montage of smiling faces that DuVernay said represent "black folks in everyday life, enjoying life."

"All that was to say, even through this oppression and marginalization and this bias and this racism is a part of our lives here, we've loved through it and we built through it," she said. "That really was the first time I started to get the idea for this show."

Hollywood, which long shied away from non-white romances, has started to make room for them with films including "Crazy Rich Asians" and the newly released "The Photograph," starring Issa Rae and Lakeith Stanfield. TV is more inclined to feature couples of color in multi-ethnic shows such as "This Is Us," and routinely in sitcoms such as "black-ish" or a dramedy like Rae's "Insecure" or Donald Glover's "Atlanta."

Filling the void wasn't "top of mind," DuVernay said. But Alano Miller, who stars opposite Xosha Roquemore in "Cherish the Day," is glad she did.

Miller ("Underground," "Jane the Virgin") plays Evan Fisher, born into a Los Angeles family with means and making a name for himself in tech, opposite Roquemore's Gently James, from a less-settled background and with an adventurous streak. Award-winning screen legend Cicely Tyson ("Sounder," "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman"), plays Gently's mentor, a woman who's lived a celebrated life.

"As an actor, I'm looking at holes: where we're not being seen, or what is interesting in the way we can tell it," said Miller, applying that to TV's overall lack of romances, not only ethnic ones. "I haven't seen anything in a long, long time that had to do with love in general," he said, aside from the rare bird like Amazon's "Modern Love."

Looking back, Miller was as much taken with the classic films of Cary Grant (including 1957's "An Affair to Remember," saluted by filmmaker Nora Ephron in 1993's "Sleepless in Seattle") as he was with his own generation's movies, including 1997's "Love Jones" with Larenz Tate and Nia Long,

"Who doesn't love romance?" Miller said. "Who doesn't want to have that heart-pounding (feeling), who doesn't want to talk about love and in such a joyous way, as opposed to the time that we live in, which is a bit dark ... and everyone's very sensitive."

Roquemore was glad to tackle her first screen romance, which she thought might not be "in the cards" for her given that black female leads in love stories are usually light-skinned and because she'd become known for her comedic work, including in Mindy Kaling's "The Mindy Project."

Since she's had her own real-life romances (including with Stanfield, her former partner with whom she has a daughter), perhaps it was a "question of me not thinking big enough," Roquemore said. Then came "Cherish the Day."

"It's so cool for it to happen," she said. "And in terms of it being a show about black love, I think we need as many human iterations of black people in media as we can get. We're still trying to normalize the regular black experience, so if I can play a role in the process that does that, I'm honored."

DuVernay said the series has the right home on the Oprah Winfrey-founded OWN, where it reaches black female viewers that she described as focused on family, relationships and spiritual well-being (although as with "Queen Sugar" and its second window on Hulu, "Cherish the Day" will reach others as well).

"We have an audience that is dynamic and dedicated and underserved with things that look beautiful, writing that is meaningful, and that they've really responded to," DuVernay said.

Obituaries

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Theresa Ann 'Teri' Fedewa

March 22, 1960 – Feb. 19, 2020

It is with great sadness that the family of Theresa Ann "Teri" Fedewa announce her passing on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020, at the age of 59.

Teri will be lovingly remembered by her children Michelle, Aaron and Donnie Tooley; also, by her brother, Rick (Ginger) Fedewa and by her mother, Rita Fedewa.

Calling hours for family and friends will be from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 24, 2020 at McDonald Funeral Home, 231 Falls Avenue, Wabash.

Those who desire can make donations to the Wabash County Animal Shelter.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.mcdonaldfunerals.com

'West Side Story' opening draws protesters

By JOHN CARUCCI
Associated Press

NEW YORK — There was a chorus outside the Broadway Theatre on Thursday at the opening night of a new revival of "West Side Story" but what was being sung was a protest chant.

A group of about 100 people demanded the removal of cast member Amar Ramasar, who was fired and then reinstated last year at New York City Ballet for sharing nude photos of women and sexually explicit texts.

The protesters chanted "Hey hey, ho ho, Amar Ramasar has got to go!" before the curtain went up even as the opening night celebration drew such stars as Andrea Martin, Julie Taymor, Vanessa Hudgens, Alec Baldwin and Iman.

Protests outside Broadway shows are relatively rare but have occurred by anti-Scientology activists outside "All My Sons" starring Katie Holmes in 2008 and outside "The Scottsboro Boys" in 2010 by people upset by that show's material.

Alexandra Waterbury, a former student with the City Ballet's affiliated school, the School of American Ballet, alleged in 2018 that Ramasar and two other men shared nude photos of her, taken without her knowledge, with other men in the company.

Since, then, there's been a petition to remove Ramasar from "West Side Story," where he plays Bernardo, the leader of the Sharks. Producers in a statement last week backed the actor, noting that the incident took place in a different workplace and "has been both fully adjudicated and definitively concluded according to the specific rules of that workplace."

"There is zero consideration being given to his potentially being terminated from this workplace, as there has been no transgression of any kind, ever, in this workplace," the statement read.

Protesters held signs that read: "Boo Bernardo" and "Keep Predators Off the Stage." One of the organizers, Megan Rabin, said she wanted alleged abusers to know they've been put on notice.

"I hope that we can set the precedent that Broadway is no place for a sex offender. There's no place in the spotlight for a sex offender, and men who abuse their power will face consequences for it," Rabin said.

Actor's Equity Association, which represents more than 51,000 professional actors and stage managers, issued a statement saying it is trying to ensure that all Broadway actors work in a harassment-free environment.

"Everyone at 'West Side Story' should be able to go to work and perform feeling safe and protected in their workplace. Equity has been in communication with the general manager and the members of the show. As a union, Equity's role is to ensure that our members are protected in the workplace and we take that responsibility very seriously. Equity will continue to hold all employers to their legal obligation to maintain a safe and harassment-free environment," said Executive Director Mary McColl.

'Andy Griffith'-inspired movie to be shot in central Indiana

By DOMENICA BONGIOVANNI
The Indianapolis Star

DANVILLE — "The Andy Griffith Show" ended in 1968. The characters, however, never have.

Actors who impersonate the ever-vigilant Deputy Sheriff Barney Fife, sideburn-challenged barber Floyd Lawson, earnest goofball Gomer Pyle and others have kept the show's world in orbit. They reappear annually at festivals such as Mayberry Days in Mount Airy, North Carolina, and Mayberry in the Midwest in Danville.

For years, the energy from these festivals and online groups like the Andy Griffith Show Rerun Watchers Club have resulted in a nationwide fan community that's active enough to convince the sons of a former Hollywood character actor to make a modern-day movie. And in a nod to the Hoosier state's fandom, much of "Mayberry Man" will be filmed in Danville and the Indianapolis area, with a few days spent in Mount Airy and Los Angeles.

The feature-length, family-friendly comedy centers around a rude star actor who is pulled over for speeding while driving in a small Southern town. His sentence? To attend Mayberry Fest, where he learns a few things from the townspeople. While fans of "Andy Griffith" can anticipate a storyline that embraces friendship and life lessons, they shouldn't expect the film to mirror the 1960s series.

The project will bring Hollywood pedigree – in the form of former "Andy Griffith" stars and their children – to Central Indiana. At the same time, producer Cort Howell and writer-director Stark Howell, the sons of actor Hoke Howell, are opening up "Mayberry Man" to Hoosiers who want a part in it through their Kickstarter campaign.

"We also saw it as an opportunity to create something that included both some original stars from 'The Andy Griffith Show,' those that are still around, and let fans participate and actually appear in the film with them or work behind the scenes," Cort said.

The producers have raised a little more than 80 percent of the $100,000 they need for the movie. If they reach their goal by the end of the month, then Indiana businesses, actors and extras will leave a large and indelible mark.

Hoke Howell was known for his deep Southern drawl and ability to mold himself into all kinds of characters over a multidecade career. He played a watchman on "The Dukes of Hazzard," a loan officer on "The Wonder Years" and the crew boss in 1992's "Far and Away."

But Hoke's portrayal of PFC Dudley A. "Dud" Wash on two episodes of "The Andy Griffith Show" forged an ongoing legacy for his family. His sons played with Ron Howard, who starred as Opie Taylor, and his brother, Clint Howard, while their dads worked on writing projects, Cort Howell said.

Hoke also frequented "Andy Griffith" events. After their dad died in 1997, Stark and Cort discovered the widespread fan base the show still had.

The idea to crowdfund a movie was born. Not only would it allow fans to have roles, it also would give the filmmakers more freedom. The fanbase is small by big studio standards, and Hollywood isn't necessarily keen on G-rated movies set in Mayberry, Cort said.

The filmmaking team also includes co-producer Gregory Schell, cinematographer Steven Douglas Smith, makeup artist Dennis Liddiard and composer Brett Perry.

Once producers set out to work on the film, they had no problem finding a location. Through the "Andy Griffith" community, they'd already become friends with the regulars who returned each year for Danville's Mayberry in the Midwest. Cort lives in Westfield and runs a production company in Carmel, where he moved after meeting his wife.

"When my brother looked at Danville, Indiana, he was blown away that that really looks like Mayberry. He kind of fell in love with the look of Danville, and then, plus, the town really got behind the project when we started talking to them," Cort said.

The origins of Mayberry in the Midwest are, fittingly, in a diner that celebrates all things "Andy Griffith." Brad and Christine Born started Mayberry Cafe in 1989 in Danville, about 20 miles west of Indianapolis. Twenty-five years later, their customers finally convinced them to try a Mayberry festival like the ones down south.

The experience stuck. Most notably in the world of "Andy Griffith" fans, it became the home of the "Squad Car Nationals," where owners of replicas drive through an obstacle course and their passengers jump out to complete tasks. Characters – including Terry Varvel as Barney Fife and Allan Newsome as Floyd Lawson – return to play their roles. Kids can play in "Opie's World," and anyone hungry enough can compete in a pickle-eating contest.

This year, the annual parade on May 16 will be a focal point in "Mayberry Man." Christa Miller, the executive director of the Downtown Danville Partnership, said she expects that to make the crowd even bigger. Filmmakers will capture the character actors and guests stars on the route.

"They will be portraying themselves attending a festival," Cort said.

Filmmakers also are considering the former governor's residence in the Meridian Kessler neighborhood as a contender for the movie star's home. At 4343 N. Meridian St., it housed Hoosier governors from 1945 to about 1970.

"The Howell brothers wanted a house that could pass for old Hollywood, and they needed a sweeping driveway with big formal gates that could swing open," said Allie Madden, president of the Meridian Street Foundation.

William N. Thompson, president of Stutz Motor Car Co., built the home in 1920, according its documentation on the National Register of Historic Places. It boasts limestone steps, an arched stained glass window and gold bathroom fixtures.

The home resides in a preservation area, Madden said, which means that homeowners must follow rules on how they can change their landscapes and homes. If it's chosen, however, she's looking into temporarily borrowing palm trees and other plants that could be found in California.

The movie star also will drive a red convertible Ferrari borrowed from a Carmel resident, Cort said.

While "Mayberry Man" isn't another episode of "The Andy Griffith Show," its roots are clear. The core of the cast is made up of original stars, who will play themselves in cameo-type roles, and their family members, Cort said. That includes:

- Clint Howard (Ron Howard's younger brother, who played the tiny cowboy Leon),
- Ronnie Schell (who played Duke Slater on the spinoff "Gomer Pyle: USMC"),
- Maggie Peterson (who played Charlene Darling),
- Karen Knotts (daughter of Don Knotts, who played Barney Fife),
- Dixie Griffith (Andy Griffith's daughter) and
- George Lindsey Jr. (son of George Lindsey, who played Goober Pyle).

At this point, the actor who will play the movie star has not yet been cast, Cort said. Who they choose depends on the fundraising campaign. So does the Indiana contingent of the cast. The filmmakers have an undisclosed amount of preliminary fundraising, Cort said, but the script and local opportunities depend on raising an additional $100,000, and ideally more than that, by Feb. 29.

To get involved and donate, visit https://bit.ly/37zib6C or search for "Mayberry Man" on Kickstarter.com.

The Mayberry in the Midwest festival will be May 15-17 in Danville. Find the full schedule at mayberryinthemidwest.com.

OVERCROWDING

From page A1

ACLU of Indiana's director of communications.

The ACLU of Indiana has filed overcrowding lawsuits in more than a dozen county jails, including six ongoing cases in Allen, Gibson, Henry, Marshall, Vigo and Wabash counties, and one case open for monitoring in Monroe County.

In response to a Plain Dealer request Thursday, Wabash County Sheriff Ryan Baker declined to comment on the lawsuit, saying they don't comment on pending litigation.

Confluence of issues

In a phone interview, Pactor said Wabash County's issues in this area were far from unique.

"Really the moment at which things shifted here was the confluence of the opioid epidemic and Indiana's decision to move Level 6 offenders in county jails instead of housing them in Indiana Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities. And those two things happened around the same time, which has a catastrophic impact on local communities," she said.

According to a 2017 jail inspection report by the DOC, 37 of the 92 counties in Indiana are at or over 100 percent capacity, and 59 counties are at or over 80 percent capacity.

A bill passed in 2015 forced county jails to house Level 6 felons instead of the DOC, which traditionally housed all felons in Indiana.

In May 2019, House Bill 1078 was passed by the Indiana Legislature, which allowed counties to send certain Level 6 felons back to the DOC.

Yet, the problems have remained.

Dealing with overcrowding

The Wabash County Jail regularly houses more than 100 persons and the membership of the proposed class is constantly changing as prisoners enter and leave the facility. The current jail was constructed in 1979, with some renovations in 2006. The jail contains 72 permanent, operational beds. The jail is linear in structure, with various sized cell blocks containing individual cells and a small area outside of the cells that contains tables and chairs, known as a "day room." The cells that are designed to house more than one prisoner have two beds, arranged on top of one another like bunk beds.

Under Indiana law, county jails are periodically inspected by Indiana DOC jail inspectors. The most recent inspection of the jail was conducted in February 2019. At the time of the inspection of the jail, the DOC's jail inspector noted that on the day of inspection the jail exceeded its rated capacity and that there was not a bed for all the prisoners. At the time of the inspection, the jail housed 108 inmates, and an additional 64 inmates were being temporarily housed out of the county.

The Wabash County Jail is above its rated capacity 100 percent of the time and has been since at least 2016.

"What's interesting about the Wabash County Jail is just how long it's been overcrowded and to what degree. I would say Wabash County is probably on the more extreme end of the jails that I've seen recently in terms of how overcrowded it is and the lengths that the sheriff has had to go to do to try to accommodate all of these individuals," said Pactor.

Wabash County Commissioners have in public meetings indicated that the jail is chronically overcrowded and that the county urgently needs a new jail. During one such meeting in October 2019, Baker was given unanimous approval by the commissioners for an interlocal governmental agreement with Elkhart County to house Wabash County Jail inmates at a rate of $40 per day through the end of 2020. County Attorney Steve Downs had previously given his approval to the agreement. At the time, Baker said the county routinely sends inmates to both Miami and Elkhart counties "because we have more prisoners than beds."

"Elkhart County built a very large jail facility years ago which turned out to be pretty forward-thinking on their part. I know they've taken on a lot of inmates particularly from other counties in northern Indiana because it's so easily accessible. Certainly, that's something that sheriffs around the state are having to look at. And at a very large expense to them. I mean the per diem rates to house inmates out of the county is not cheap," she said.

County looking for solutions

Last month, after being named chairman for the year, Wabash County Commissioner Brian K. Haupert said the county was in the process of looking at a new jail facility.

"That committee has been formed. It's going to be a long process. I don't think we're going to get there this year, but we're going to move forward with that," he said.

Haupert said they were looking at a new building, possibly at the Wabash County Farm site, as opposed to trying to renovate the current location.

"That's part of our thinking in developing that. We're going to have to do that anyway for that facility so we'd just as well prepare that," he said. "(The current jail is) all landlocked and it needs to be somewhere else where we can in the future, down the line if they need to expand it again they can do that."

Pactor said she had sympathy for local officials trying to navigate a thorny set of challenges.

"The sheriff tends to know there is an issue in the jail," she said. "Sheriffs tend not to take these too personally because they're in a bind as well. In a lot of cases, I have no idea what the case is here but in a lot of cases, sheriffs are desperate for new jails. And they're sometimes caught in a funding bind with the county council."

Pactor said their lawsuit doesn't seek damages, only injunctive relief.

"Basically just fix the jail," she said. "Having spent just a little bit of time in the (Wabash County Jail) and … knowing what I know about how jails are constructed and renovated, that would be a pretty difficult jail I would think to make it constitutionally sufficient. If the county were able to build a new jail that was constitutionally sufficient that would absolutely resolve that lawsuit."

However, Pactor said inmates were not barred from seeking damages on their own through separate lawsuits, despite being part of the class.

"The longer it takes to resolve a situation like this, the county and the sheriff are opening themselves up to liability in the event that individual incarcerated people choose to raise their own lawsuits," she said.

Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

Opinion

SPEAK UP

How to contact your legislators:

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LETTERS GUIDELINES

The Wabash Plain Dealer encourages your letters to the editor forum, which is designed to be a forum for exchange of ideas between readers about issues of community importance.

Please sign your letter. Your name will be used with the letter that is published in the Plain Dealer. Your letter will be returned if it is your desire to remain anonymous.

Since we may want to write or call you to verify the letter, we ask that you include your address and telephone number. All our letters to the editor are published in the interest of fair play, so we trust our letter writers will refrain from personal attacks on other persons or groups.

A letter should be less than two pages long, preferably of double-spaced typing.

In order to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this exchange of ideas, please try to limit your letters to one per month per household.

To submit a letter, please write the Wabash Plain Dealer at 99 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

Letters also may be hand-delivered to the newspaper office, 123 W. Canal St. The office is open 9-11:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you should deliver a letter during non-business hours, a drop slot is located to the left of the front door. Letters may be faxed to 260-563-0816, or email them to news@wabashplaindealer.com with "Letters to the Editor" in the subject line.

DAILY SCRIPTURE

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it?"

Luke 14:28

Michael Bloomberg struggles in the trenches

Democratic presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg has thrust himself into the race with massive TV buys and a coordinated social media campaign. But his deep pockets failed to shield him from the rough-and-tumble of his first debate appearance Wednesday night in Las Vegas.

Mr. Bloomberg, the former mayor of New York, found himself under attack during the event at Paris Las Vegas, an indication that the remaining candidates see him as a legitimate threat. Bernie Sanders, the Vermont socialist who has emerged as the Democratic front-runner, also drew plenty of attention.

The primary antagonist was Sen. Elizabeth Warren, whose campaign has fallen off a cliff after poor showings in the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary. Her strategy was clear Wednesday night: Stand out by aggressively challenging her five fellow Democrats on stage.

Mr. Bloomberg hasn't been shy about criticizing his party's lurch to the hard left and has positioned himself as a business-friendly moderate who can defeat President Donald Trump. His poll numbers have risen significantly in recent weeks, as some in the party worry about the eventual nominee being too far out of the mainstream. But it's one thing to message through controlled media; it's quite another to jump into the trenches.

It didn't take long for Sen. Warren to try to blunt Mr. Bloomberg's momentum by bringing up controversial comments he has made over the years regarding women, crime and minorities. Inexplicably, Mr. Bloomberg appeared unprepared for the assault, so Sen. Warren moved in with the shiv.

"So I'd like to talk about who we're running against," Sen. Warren said, "a billionaire who calls women 'fat broads' and 'horse-faced lesbians.' And, no, I'm not talking about Donald Trump. I'm talking about Michael Bloomberg." She later moved on to hammer him for settling allegations of sexual harassment with financial deals and nondisclosure agreements.

Overall, the candidates offered no new policy proposals and broke little ground. The debate was noteworthy primarily for Mr. Bloomberg's presence and its prickly tone. The latter reflects the campaign entering a crucial stage.

Whether Sen. Warren's strategy can revive her flagging campaign remains to be seen, but she was clearly on the offensive. Sen. Sanders was his usual gruff, unapologetic self. He avoided any major pitfalls and remains the favorite in Saturday's Nevada caucuses. Former Vice President Joe Biden tried to stay above the fray, but is still struggling to get off the mat. Pete Buttigieg appears no match for the Sanders machine, and Sen. Amy Klobuchar performed well in trying to stake out a middle ground but has yet to sustain traction with voters.

As for Mr. Bloomberg … well, he might want to brush up on his defense – and stockpile flak jackets as Super Tuesday nears.

This editorial was first published in the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

Physician (Senate), heal thyself

George Will

Shortly before the Senate, sitting as an impeachment court, contemplated the president's misbehavior, it demonstrated its own flair for disregarding rules and violating norms. Done with bipartisan bonhomie, the episode illuminates the decay of government.

Bill Clinton's finest achievement as president, the North American Free Trade Agreement, passed in December 1993 with more Senate and House support from Republicans (34 and 132) than from Democrats (27 and 102). Many Democrats predicted devastation of U.S. manufacturing, and Donald Trump was characteristically Cassandra-like. Today manufacturing capacity is 66 percent larger than in 1994. Undeterred by evidence, candidate Trump termed NAFTA a "disaster" and "the worst trade deal maybe ever signed anywhere."

As president he is replacing it with the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which is remarkably similar to NAFTA, with two significant exceptions: It is the first U.S. trade agreement designed to decrease trade, and it is a larded with Democratic policy objectives.

As Sen. Pat Toomey, R-Pa., notes, under NAFTA there were zero tariffs on 100 percent of manufactured goods and 97.5 percent of agricultural products that crossed the three nations' borders. U.S. exports to Mexico increased 500 percent. The USMCA's constructive modernizations of NAFTA – the enormous digital economy did not exist in 1994 – are, Toomey says, "mostly taken from the Trans-Pacific Partnership," which was negotiated by the Obama administration, and for that reason was anathema to Donald Trump. His scrapping of the TPP was a gift to China.

The USMCA ends free trade in automobiles and auto parts with Mexico: By imposing impossible minimum-wage requirements on Mexican factories, the USMCA guarantees that cars and parts will be subject to tariffs – taxes paid by U.S. consumers. The USMCA also compels Mexico to change its labor laws to promote unionization. And the provision that the USMCA expires in 16 years is, Toomey says, "designed to have a chilling effect on investment." He notes that members of Congress who have opposed every trade agreement before this one support it, as does the AFL-CIO, which generally opposes free trade agreements.

The USMCA's substance is regrettable. The process that produced it was even more so because it was lawless.

Agreements that fully comply with the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) cannot be amended and can be passed by a simple majority. But the USMCA did not comply: The implementing legislation was not submitted to Congress 30 days before a committee or floor vote on it, a requirement necessary if Congress is to perform its constitutional duty to establish trade policy. Also, the TPA requires that the implementing legislation contain only provisions "strictly necessary or appropriate" for implementation. Otherwise, the TPA's expedited process could be used to sneak extraneous matters into law without adequate scrutiny, or possible opposition through amendment, or a 60-vote threshold. But for the first time ever, implementing legislation contained appropriations, $843 million, including $50 million for salaries and expenses for the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, which was designated an "emergency."

The Senate and its once-formidable Finance Committee are, Toomey believes, being "marginalized" and made "irrelevant" as the executive wields authority delegated to it by Congress – but without Congress insisting on compliance with the terms of the delegation. The question, Toomey says, is: "Are we willing to enforce our own law that governs the proceedings of this body?"

Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La., felt similarly in December when Congress "passed a $1.4 trillion spending extravaganza, complete with half a trillion dollars in tax cuts and a bevy of favors for special interests – all without debate and without committee consideration, based on decisions made by the bill's sponsors over a weekend." The $300 billion "Cadillac tax," a restraint on lavish employer-provided health plans, was repealed. This demonstrated that Congress cannot repeal Obamacare but will not pay for it. Amendments were not allowed, debate was limited to 90 minutes, and the Senate voted on the bill less than three days after it was unveiled. "Senate leadership clearly didn't want it to be understood or discussed," Cassidy said.

In the 116th Congress, now in its second year, there have been, Toomey notes, votes on just 20 amendments – one was a "sense of the Senate" legal nullity, four were "noncontroversial or largely devoid of substance," six "were killed using a procedural maneuver," and none of the other nine "came close to passage." The Finance Committee has held one substantive markup in 13 months.

The president's institutional vandalism is partially explained, although not excused, by the breadth and depth of his ignorance concerning the manners and mores of a republic. The Senate's self-degradation is even more depressing.

George Will's email address is georgewill@washpost.com.

LETTERS

Stop persecuting veterans

Most states have legalized medical marijuana for war vets afflicted with chronic pain, cancer, combat PTSD, glaucoma and many other conditions. Indiana has laws to imprison war vets for a full year if arrested with even the tiniest amount of marijuana. And, to jail us for months pre-trial, if we can't pay bail. Look it up, that's the law in Indiana. Law created by Bone Spur Republicans, and which the Bone Spur Republicans are pushing every day to make even harsher.

I've asked Gov. Eric Holcomb's office, GOP state legislators and GOP prosecutors about these laws. They all tell me, they would never enforce these harsh laws against me. But they destroy the lives of war vets with these laws every day. Why would they fight so stubbornly to keep these anti-war-vet laws on the books, if they had no intention of harming anyone with them?

Encoding laws not intended to be enforced erodes respect for law and order and encourages selective enforcement to punish political enemies. Respect a war vet, vote straight Democratic until the Hoosier Bone Spur Republicans stop persecuting war vets for using a healthful herb, that most of us war vets first discovered while in the military.

Ron Nesler
Vietnam War veteran
New Harmony

Include independent dispute resolution in 'surprise billing' legislation

Most Hoosiers agree on the need to reduce health care costs, to improve access to care and to end the practice of surprise medical billing. And Indiana physicians would agree.

They have witnessed families struggle to pay for emergency or unplanned medical services from providers that are outside their health insurance network. However, the two pieces of "surprise billing" legislation moving forward in the Indiana General Assembly, Senate Bill 3 and House Bill 1004, lack any methods to determine fair payment for the medical professionals who are there when patients need them most.

That's why doctors in Indiana and across the country are advocating for independent dispute resolution, or IDR, a process by which an unbiased third party is available to settle payment disputes between insurers and out-of-network physicians. Otherwise, there will be no obligation for insurers to pay physicians a fair rate.

Without an IDR process, physicians are concerned the repercussions will lead to higher health care costs and less access to critical care – the exact problems lawmakers have vowed to fix.

Cost of health care

A priority for the Indiana General Assembly is to lower health care costs for Hoosier consumers, and rightfully so. But doctors are not the problem here. According to the Health Care Cost Institute, physician fees in Indiana cost employers 22.5 percent less than the national average. In fact, Hoosier companies spend less per person on their employees' professional medical services than all but three states in the U.S. – and less than every neighboring state.

Cutting physician fees in Indiana when such fees are already well below the rest of the nation will not make health care cheaper and more accessible. It will lead to more practice groups getting acquired by health systems or simply closing altogether. Such consolidation will result in less competition in the market, higher prices, longer wait times and fewer doctors available to serve our communities.

Access to health care

For vulnerable populations, especially in rural areas, the only thing worse than surprise medical billing is not having any medical providers at all. Some independent physician groups contract with rural facilities to staff evening and weekend hours. These arrangements could be impacted without a fair solution for payment disagreements between insurance companies and out-of-network providers, leaving rural citizens without 24/7 emergency medical care.

An effective solution

To be a truly effective solution, surprise billing legislation at both the state and federal level needs to include an unbiased, market-based approach – the kind that IDR provides.

The competing federal bills up for consideration in Washington, D.C. include independent dispute resolution. A bipartisan effort to end surprise billing was recently proposed in the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee by the ranking Republican, Rep. Kevin Brady (R-Texas), and the committee chair, Rep. Richard E. Neal (D-Mass.). Their bill, "Consumer Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2020," would eliminate surprise billing AND provide a method for fair payment with IDR serving as a backstop to incentivize parties to contract in good faith.

I urge you to contact your state and federal lawmakers to support this approach to end surprise billing – including an independent, third-party arbitration that is fair, fast and free of bureaucracy. That way, patients can focus on getting the medical care they need, when and where they need it, at a cost they can reasonably afford.

Julie Reed is the executive vice president for the Indiana State Medical Association.

HISTORY

Today is Saturday, Feb. 22, the 53rd day of 2020. There are 313 days left in the year.

Highlight in history:
On Feb. 22, 1980, the "Miracle on Ice" took place in Lake Placid, New York, as the United States Olympic hockey team upset the Soviets, 4-3.

Thought for Today: "It is better to offer no excuse than a bad one." – President George Washington (1732-1799).

PULSE

From page A1

Manchester hosts Spartan Smash high school eSports tourney

High school teams across the Midwest are invited to the Spartan Smash Invitational, a first-time eSports competition, set for Saturday, Feb. 29, on the North Manchester campus of Manchester University. Registration will close at 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28. The tournament bracket will be made available that Saturday morning. Competition is in Flory Auditorium at the Science Center. For more information and registration, visit https://smash.gg/tournament/spartan-smash-invitational.

Salamonie Senior Luncheon set for March 2

The monthly Salamonie Senior Luncheon will be held at noon on Monday, March 2, at the Salamonie Lake Interpretive Center, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. Anyone age 50 or older is welcome to attend. UWIS interpretive naturalist Shelly Reed will present the "Civilian Conservation Corps of Indiana" through an engaging trivia presentation. The program begins with a carry-in meal at noon. Ham and beans will be provided. Guests should bring a side dish to share, a beverage and their table service. A $1 donation will be accepted. Reservations may be made by calling 260-468-2127.

Salamonie Preschool offers 'S is for Spring' March 3

Preschool-age children and their adults are invited to Salamonie Preschool's "S is for Spring" 1 to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 3 at Upper Wabash Interpretive Services, 3691 S. New Holland Road, Andrews. The program fee is $2 per child. Advance registration is appreciated. Register by calling Upper Wabash Interpretive Services at 260-468-2127. For more information on other UWIS programs, visit dnr.IN.gov/uwis or facebook.com/upperwabash.

Employers invited to register for Manchester Career Fair

Employers are invited to meet students at the Manchester University career, internship and graduate school fair from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 4, at the upper level of the Jo Young Switzer Center on the North Manchester campus. Setup begins at 11:30 p.m. with lunch and informal networking. Each employer registered will receive a covered 6-foot table and two chairs. The cost to register is $40 to $50, depending on the type of employer. Fair sponsorship is also available for $150. For more information and to register, visit http://bit.ly/MUCareerFair2020. Employers with questions may email CareerDevelopment@manchester.edu.

Create glass-on-glass framed mosaic image inspired by nature

The multi-day classes instructed by local stained glass artist Katy Gray will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 5; Wednesday, March 11; Friday, March 13; Monday, March 16; and Tuesday, March 17, at Salamonie Interpretive and Nature Center, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. Participants should plan to attend each meeting. The cost is $60 per person. Each participant will choose one: either a bee, red-tailed hawk or box turtle for their project. All materials will be supplied. All classes require advance registration with a deadline of Sunday, March 1. Space is limited. Call 260-468-2127 for registration or questions.

Manchester University Theatre Society offers variety show

The Manchester University Theatre Society is putting on the Spring 2020 Variety Show at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 5 in Cordier Auditorium. The show at the North Manchester campus is free and open to the public.

'Death by Chocolate' tickets on sale

The Wabash Area Community Theater's winter comedy "Death by Chocolate" will open at 6 p.m. and dinner is at 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7; and doors will open at noon and dinner is at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, March 8 at the Charley Creek Inn. Tickets are on sale now at the Charley Creek Inn reception desk. For more information, call Bruce Rovelstad at 260- 330-0543 or Bev Vanderpool at 765-661-8206.

Beginner's one-day stained-glass class scheduled

A beginner's one-day stained-glass class instructed by local stained glass artist Katy Gray will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 8 at Salamonie Interpretive and Nature Center, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. The cost is $25 per participant. A red-tailed hawk feather sun catcher will be made. All materials will be supplied. All classes require advance registration with a deadline of Sunday, March 1. Space is limited. Call 260-468-2127 for registration or questions.

Woman's Clubhouse to host March luncheon

The Woman's Clubhouse will welcome Teresa Rody, interpretive manager from the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services, with a program featuring live raptors, after the noon luncheon Tuesday, March 10. Reynold's Oil is sponsoring the live bird program. Make your reservations by calling Carol McDonald at 260-563-2331, or Mary Delauter, 260-563-6613 for the lunch and program or just the program.

Salute to Ag Dinner to honor 2019 Farm Family of the Year

Grow Wabash County and the Salute to Ag committee have announced that Steve Flack and his family have been selected as the 2019 Farm Family of the Year. They will be recognized for their contributions to the Wabash County agriculture industry during Grow Wabash County's annual Salute to Ag Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 11 at the Heartland REMC, 350 Wedcor Ave. Tickets are $20 each and sponsorship opportunities are available ranging from $100 up to $2,500. Registration may be completed by visiting growwabashcounty.com/events, by emailing info@growwabashcounty.com or calling 260-563-5258.

Komets game to celebrate Wabash County March 13

Wabash County will be the MVP during the third annual Wabash County Night at the Fort Wayne Komets game at 8:05 p.m. Friday, March 13 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, 4000 Parnell Ave., Fort Wayne. While supplies last, tickets can be bought for $15 per ticket at https://groupmatics.events/event/Wabashcommunity3 or by emailing Mitch Meinholz at mitch@komets.com or by calling 260-482-6812.

Intermediate two-day stained-glass scheduled

A two-day intermediate class instructed by local stained-glass artist Katy Gray will be held from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, March 14 and Sunday, March 15 at Salamonie Interpretive and Nature Center, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. All participants of this class must have had recent, prior stained glass cutting and smoothing experience. The cost is $40. The project will be a bee on a coneflower. All materials will be supplied. All classes require advance registration with a deadline of Sunday, March 1. Space is limited. Call 260-468-2127 for registration or questions.

Adult mental Health First Aid training planned

Purdue Extension will offer Adult Mental Health First Aid training from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 17 at the Wabash REMC Community Room, 350 Wedcor Ave. The Mental Health First Aid program is open to any adult. For more information, visit www.extension.purdue.edu/mhfa or contact Mindy Mayes by email at mayes7@purdue.edu or by phone at 260-663-0661 ext. 1408.

St. Trolley's Day Tour on sale

Visit Wabash County has announced that tickets for the St. Trolley's Day Tour happening on March 14 are available for purchase. Tour times offered are 6, 6:30 or 7 p.m. and will last about two hours. The St. Trolley's Day Tour is $25 per person and all-inclusive. To register for this tour, visit www.VisitWabashCounty.com and click on Tours/Trolley Rental. You may also stop in the Welcome Center at 221 S. Miami St., or call 260-563-7171. Tickets are $25 per person and is due upon registration. You must be 21 or older to participate in this tour.

Wabash Kiwanis Club's Pancake Day returns in March

The Wabash Kiwanis Club will host its annual Pancake Day fundraiser, the service organization's biggest annual fundraiser, from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 14, at the Bob Elrod Exhibit Hall, located just off of Gillen Avenue at the Wabash County 4-H Fairgrounds. The event's Pancake Eating Contest will return and will start at noon. Tickets are $7 in advance and $8 at the door for adults (13 and older) and $4 in advance and $5 at the door for children ages 6-12. Children 5 and younger eat for free. Tickets are available from Wabash Kiwanis members. Those who have questions can contact Mike Keaffaber at keaffaberm@msdwc.k12.in.us.

NMCH to host Smithsonian traveling exhibit

The North Manchester Center for History will be hosting the Smithsonian's traveling exhibit, "Crossroads: Change in Rural America" from March 21 to May 3.

Manchester invites high school students to submit compositions

The Manchester University Department of Music seeks high school composers for its first Composition Workshop and Reading Session on Wednesday, April 8. They are invited to submit original compositions to be performed and recorded by Manchester University faculty musicians. The deadline is March 23. Send submissions to Reed at tmreed@manchester.edu. Submissions should include a score (PDF or Finale file); contact information with name, phone number and mailing address; and name of high school currently attending. There is no fee to submit. Selected composers will be contacted with details about the evening event via email.

Celebrate Ivy Tech in Wabash at Monopoly Night

Ivy Tech Community College is hosting its 11th annual Wabash Monopoly Night from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, April 24 in the Parkview Health Ballroom of Eagles Theatre, 106 W. Market St. This event is open to the community. Guests must RSVP by April 15 to Laura Leichty by email at lleichty@ivytech.edu or by phone 260-481-2243.

Comedian Michael Palascak to perform at Lagro benefit event

"Dia de Lagro" will take place Tuesday, May 5 at the Eads Barn, 4725 E. 200 North, Urbana. Appetizers, cocktails, singer Kimberly Rutledge and Emcee Reed Christiansen are set to begin at 5:30 p.m. A Mexican-themed dinner, catered by Gallery 64, will begin at 6 p.m. with comedian Michael Palascak taking the stage at 7 p.m. Tickets for the event are $75 each, $125 per couple or $500 for a table of eight. For more information, visit lagrocanalfoundation.com. Those interested in donating prizes for the silent auction or would like to become a main sponsor may email lagrocanalfoundation@gmail.com.

Editor's note: If you have an upcoming event to submit, please send it by email to news@wabashplaindealer.com no later than five days before the event itself. Please use complete sentences, Associated Press style and Microsoft Word or PDF file formats.

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By Dr. Robert Schroering

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Quick Hits

NFL's Huddle initiative nears 400 million volunteer minutes

NEW YORK (AP) — The NFL says its Huddle for 100 initiative totaled more than 1 million volunteers donating nearly 400 million minutes to their communities.

The Miami Dolphins led the way with 75.623 million minutes from 163 events.

As part of its celebration of the 100th NFL season, Huddle for 100 was launched at the draft last April, seeking to inspire 1 million people to give back 100 minutes of their time. In November, the NFL surpassed the 100-million-minute mark and by the Super Bowl in Miami, there were 397,253,630 volunteer minutes from 1,020,846 people.

"Huddle for 100 brought our fans and communities together and the impact will be felt for the next 100 seasons of the NFL," Commissioner Roger Goodell said.

A large portion of the volunteer minutes were contributed through the 32 teams and their programs. The Dolphins did not top the list in any month, but wound up with the highest season total.

"We're very proud," said team owner Stephen Ross, whose organization will receive $100,000 from the NFL Foundation to be used on a community service project. "We always want to be the best at what we do, be the best in class.

Former NFL player McFadden pleads guilty in DWI case

DALLAS (AP) — Former Dallas Cowboys running back Darren McFadden was sentenced to four days in jail after he pleaded guilty to driving while intoxicated early last year.

McFadden was arrested in January 2019 after he fell asleep in the drive-through lane of a Dallas-area fast-food restaurant.

He pleaded guilty Friday to driving while intoxicated, the Dallas Morning News reported. He was sentenced to four days in jail and received credit for one day of time served, and a resisting arrest charge was dismissed.

McFadden's attorney did not immediately reply to a Thursday phone message seeking comment.

Submit your news

The *Plain Dealer* is accepting all news, varsity, junior varsity, middle school, elementary school and non-school affiliated recreational sports. To get a brief in the newspaper, please provide final score and any highlights pertaining to the event, including first and last names of participants. Reports must be received by 3 p.m. to make it in the following day's edition. Items may be:

- Emailed to sports@wabashplaindealer.com.
- Called into 260-225-4523 after 11 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Please do not leave complete results on voice mail.
- Mailed into *Plain Dealer,* 123 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

Organizations or individuals emailing materials should call the sports department to ensure the information was received. The *Plain Dealer* reserves the right to edit material for length, clarity and/or style, and does not guarantee publication.

Jacob Rude / Plain Dealer

Wabash's Jasper Walter (10) defends Blackford's Luke Brown (25) during last season's contest.

Apaches set for memorable home finale vs. Brown, Bruins

By JACOB RUDE
sports@wabashplaindealer.com

Wabash's boys' basketball team has gone the whole season and over a year in total without dropping a game on its home court in Coolman Gymnasium.

To finish the season with an unbeaten home mark on Saturday, the Apaches will have to pass their toughest test of the year against one of the best opposing players of the season.

Blackford will take to the court in Wabash's home finale led by standout junior guard Luke Brown. On his way to challenging the all-time career scoring record, Brown is averaging 33.3 points per game. For his career, Brown is closing in on 2,000 points as he's amassed 1.855 heading into Saturday's game.

The Bruins, coming in with a 14-5 record, were ranked earlier in the season in the Class 2A polls after starting the year with five straight wins. But just nine wins in their last 14 games since, including a stretch of four losses in six games from late December until late January.

"We're playing a team that'll probably have 16, 18 wins coming in on Saturday," Wabash head coach Paul Wright said. "We just want to protect home court. We have not lost here all year and we have one game left. Those seven (seniors)...they know that. Blackford's a really good team. They're fun to play against. But it's also a 2A team that's really good. They're not in our sectional but they're a good team to get us ready for our sectional, which is not easy. So, we just want to come out and win one for those guys because they've put a lot of time and effort in since basically second grade.

"But it's going to take a real big effort because they've got a pretty good player in Luke Brown and they've also got four other guys that are really good around him. It's going to take a total team effort to try to come out and get a big one on Saturday."

Brown has found himself in headlines since his freshman campaign. While he's taken a step back from his 35.0 points per game average from last season, Brown is still well over the 30-point per game mark.

The biggest difference this season has been a marked

See **APACHES**, page B3

American women seek more than $66M in damages from U.S. Soccer

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

Players on the U.S. women's national team are seeking more than $66 million in damages as part of their gender discrimination lawsuit against the U.S. Soccer Federation.

The damages were included in slew of papers filed Thursday night in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles ahead of a trial scheduled to start May 5.

Among the documents filed were the separate collective bargaining agreements of the U.S. men's and women's teams, which had not previously been made public.

Players on the women's national team sued the federation last March alleging institutionalized gender discrimination that includes inequitable compensation between the men's and women's teams.

Each side in the class-action lawsuit asked for a summary judgment in their favor. The estimate of damages, including interest, was provided by Finnie Bevin Cook, an economist from Deiter Consulting Group, which was retained by the suing players.

The collective bargaining agreements showed a disparity in bonuses but also highlighted the different pay structures between the two teams.

"Women's national team players are paid differently because they specifically asked for and negotiated a completely different contract than the men's national team, despite being offered, and rejecting, a similar pay-to-play agreement during the past negotiations," U.S. Soccer said in a statement. "Their preference was a contract that provides significant additional benefits that the men's national team does not have, including guaranteed annual salaries, medical and dental insurance, paid child-care assistance, paid pregnancy and parental leave, severance benefits, salary continuation

See **SOCCER**, page B3

It's champs vs. cheaters as Nationals, Astros meet Saturday

By KRISTIE RIEKEN
Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — It will be champs vs. cheaters in a World Series rematch when the Washington Nationals and Houston Astros play their exhibition opener on Saturday night.

The last time these teams met, the Nationals were celebrating their first World Series title in Houston after winning Game 7 at Minute Maid Park. Since then, the Astros have become the league's villains, with a sign-stealing scandal sullying their reputation and casting a shadow on their 2017 title.

As the Astros prepare to take the field for the first time since their cheating scam was uncovered there's much speculation about what kind of reception they'll receive, though the players say they're focused on baseball.

"Honestly, I haven't thought about it," shortstop Carlos Correa said. "But whatever it is, our job is to go there and play baseball. So, I'm not too concerned about that."

There have been a handful of hecklers at Astros camp this week as the team assembled for the first time since Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred found they used electronics to steal signs during their run to the 2017 World Series title and again in the 2018 season. The investigation, which led to the suspensions and subsequent firings of manager AJ Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow, found the Astros used the video feed from a center field camera to see and decode the opposing catcher's signs. Players banged on a trash can to signal to batters what was coming, believing it would improve the batter's odds of getting a hit.

One man banged on a trash can as Astros players took batting practice Monday and someone yelled: "cheater" at second baseman Jose Altuve as he walked by fans the same day.

Correa, who was part of the team that was found to have stolen signs, knows things are going to be "tough" for the Astros on the road this season but doesn't expect things to be bad in a spring training game.

"But there's always going to be fans that are going to go to the ball park and have fun in their own way, and that's talking trash," Correa said. "And that's fine. You see that in every sport. So that shouldn't bother us."

New Houston manager Dusty Baker hasn't spent any time concerning himself with how the Astros will be received.

"I try not to worry about things because it doesn't do any good," he said. "You can

See **MLB**, page B3

NFL owners offer 17 games, shorter preseason, larger rosters

By BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK — The new labor agreement accepted by NFL owners and now being considered by players features a 17-game season, shorter preseason, larger rosters and limits on the number of international games.

The NFL Players Association's executive committee and player representatives are to discuss the proposal Friday by conference call. If the NFLPA does not approve the agreement, the current CBA, which expires in March 2021, would remain in effect and further talks would be required.

Several people familiar with the proposal say it features increases in minimum salaries; changes in practice squad makeup and eligibility; and reduced offseason and preseason requirements as pivotal parts of the deal.

Those people spoke on condition of anonymity because provisions in the 10-year agreement that would run through 2029 are not being made public.

An expansion of the playoffs to seven teams in each conference, with only the top seed in the AFC and NFC getting a wild-card bye, can be instituted by the league without any negotiations – as long as the postseason remains in a four-week format.

One of the wild-card weekend games might wind up as a Monday night contest.

The 17-game schedule actually is a compromise offer for some owners who wanted 18 games. Adding the one regular-season match would seem to indicate each of those games would be at a neutral site.

But the league has promised the union to cap the number of international games and that there would not be a full week of such contests. More likely is a continued mix of games in England (and other European sites) and Mexico. Most team schedules will have nine home games and eight road games.

The preseason would be reduced from four games to three, not counting the Hall of Fame game that starts the exhibition schedule.

There would be no extra bye week in the regular season.

Rosters would expand from 53 to 55, with 48 players able to dress for games rather than the current 46. Practice squads would go from 10 players to 12 and eventually to 14, probably by 2022. There would be more flexibility for protecting practice squaders from becoming free agents.

Suspensions for a positive test for marijuana likely would end, except for cases of tampering with a test. But doctors appointed by the league and union would have the ability to recommend players sit if they are not under treatment or are at risk if they suit up.

A major point of contention when the current agreement was reached in 2011 following a 4 1-2 month lockout was Commissioner Roger Goodell's role in discipline. Should these terms be accepted by the players, a neutral, jointly appointed hearing officer would make findings on off-field issues and whether the actions violated the league's personal conduct policy. Those findings would be binding, but a player could appeal – with Goodell making the final decision.

ON THE AIR

AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL (MEN'S)
3:30 a.m.
FS2 — Pre-season Challenge: Geelong at Gold Coast
AUTO RACING
1 p.m.
FS1 — NASCAR Xfinity Series: Qualifying, Las Vegas
2:30 p.m.
FS1 — NASCAR Cup Series: Qualifying, Las Vegas
4 p.m.
FS1 — NASCAR Xfinity Series: The Boyd Gaming 300, Las Vegas
8:30 p.m.
NBCSN — Monster Energy AMA Supercross: Round 8, Arlington, Texas
BOBSLEDDING/SKELETON
1:30 a.m. (Sunday)
NBCSN — IBSF World Championship: Women's Bobsled, Altenberg, Germany (taped)
BOXING
7:30 p.m.
ESPNEWS — PBC Prelims: Undercard Bouts, Las Vegas
FS1 — PBC Prelims: Undercard Bouts, Las Vegas
8 p.m.
ESPN — PBC Prelims: Undercard Bouts, Las Vegas
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN'S)
12 p.m.
CBS — Tennessee at Auburn
ESPN — Kansas at Baylor
ESPN2 — Virginia at Pittsburgh
ESPNU — Tulane at Central Florida
FOX — Marquette at Providence
1 p.m.
SECN — Missouri at Arkansas
1:30 p.m.
CBSSN — Navy at Army
2 p.m.
CBS — Texas at Kansas State
ESPN — Michigan at Purdue
ESPN2 — Houston at Memphis
ESPNU — West Virginia at Texas Christian
2:30 p.m.
FOX — Villanova at Xavier
3 p.m.
ESPNEWS — Southern Methodist at Tulsa
3:30 p.m.
CBSSN — Loyola Chicago at Missouri State
SECN — Mississippi State at Texas A&M
4 p.m.
ACCN — Florida State at North Carolina State
CBS — UCLA at Colorado
ESPN — North Carolina at Louisville
ESPN2 — Oklahoma at Oklahoma State
4:30 p.m.
NBCSN — St. Joseph's at George Mason
5:30 p.m.
CBSSN — Rhode Island at Davidson
6 p.m.
ACCN — Clemson at Boston College
ESPN — Florida at Kentucky
ESPN2 — Louisiana State at South Carolina
ESPNU — Texas Tech at Iowa State
PAC-12N — California at Washington
SECN — Georgia at Vanderbilt
6:30 p.m.
NBCSN — Richmond at St. Bonaventure
7:30 p.m.
CBSSN — Nevada (Las Vegas) at San Diego State
8 p.m.
ESPN2 — Virginia Tech at Duke
ESPNU — Oregon State at Arizona State
8:30 p.m.
SECN — Alabama at Mississippi
9 p.m.
ESPN — Oregon at Arizona
FS1 — Georgetown at DePaul
10 p.m.
ESPN2 — Gonzaga at Brigham Young
ESPNU — Fresno State at Nevada (Reno)
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (WOMEN'S)
11 a.m.
CBSSN — Navy at Army
2 p.m.
BTN — Ohio State at Rutgers
COLLEGE GYMNASTICS (WOMEN'S)
4 p.m.
PAC-12N — Oregon State at California
COLLEGE HOCKEY (MEN'S)
4 p.m.
BTN — Notre Dame at Michigan
6:30 p.m.
BTN — Minnesota at Penn State
COLLEGE LACROSSE (MEN'S)
12 p.m.
ACCN — Princeton at Virginia
BTN — Yale at Penn State
2 p.m.
PAC-12N — Furman at Utah
GOLF
12 p.m.
GOLF — PGA Tour: The WGC-Mexico Championship, Third Round, Naucalpan, Mexico
2:30 p.m.
GOLF — PGA Tour: The Puerto Rico Open, Third Round, Río Grande, Puerto Rico
NBC — PGA Tour: The WGC-Mexico Championship, Third Round, Naucalpan, Mexico
HORSE RACING
3 p.m.
FS2 — America's Day at the Races
MLB BASEBALL
1 p.m.
MLBN — Spring Training: Toronto vs. NY Yankees, Tampa, Fla.
6 p.m.
MLBN — Spring Training: Washington vs. Houston, West Palm Beach, Fla.
NBA BASKETBALL
8:30 p.m.
ABC — Phila. at Milwaukee
NHL HOCKEY
1 p.m.
NHLN — Winnipeg at Phila.
7 p.m.
NHLN — San Jose at NY Rangers
RUGBY
12:30 p.m.
NBCSN — IRL: Italy vs. Scotland, Six Nations Championship, Rome (taped)
2:30 p.m.
NBCSN — IRL: Wales vs. France, Six Nations Championship, Cardiff, Wales (taped)
10 p.m.
CBSSN — MLR: Toronto at Seattle
SKIING
12:30 a.m. (Sunday)
NBCSN — FIS Alpine World Cup: Women's Downhill, Crans Montana, Switzerland (taped)
SOCCER (MEN'S)
9:30 a.m.
FS1 — Bundesliga: Borussia Dortmund at Werder Bremen
FS2 — Bundesliga: Hoffenheim vs. Borussia Mönchengladbach
9:55 a.m.
NBCSN — Premier League: Brighton at Sheffield United
12:20 p.m.
FS2 — Bundesliga: RB Leipzig at Schalke
12:30 p.m.
NBC — Manchester City at Leicester City
9:55 p.m.
FS2 — Bundesliga: Club América at Monterrey
6:25 a.m. (Sunday)
ESPN2 — Serie A: Lazio at Genoa
TENNIS
9 a.m.
TENNIS — ATP/WTA: Marseille-ATP, Dubai-WTA – Semifinals, Dubai-WTA Final
3 p.m.
TENNIS — ATP/WTA: Delray-ATP, Rio de Janeiro-ATP
8 p.m.
TENNIS — ATP: Delray Beach Open
6 a.m. (Sunday)
TENNIS — ATP/WTA: Delray-ATP, Marseille-ATP, Doha-WTA – Singles & Doubles Finals, Doha-WTA Early Rounds
XFL FOOTBALL
2 p.m.
ABC — Houston at Tampa Bay
5 p.m.
FOX — Dallas at Seattle

Sunday, February 23
AHL HOCKEY
4 p.m.
NHLN — Rockford at Chicago
AUTO RACING
3 p.m.
FS1 — NHRA: Qualifying, Chandler, Ariz.
3:30 p.m.
FOX — NASCAR Cup Series: The Pennzoil 400, Las Vegas
9 p.m.
FS1 — NHRA: The Arizona Nationals, Chandler, Ariz. (taped)
BOBSLEDDING/SKELETON
2 a.m. (Monday)
NBCSN — IBSF World Championship: Tow-Man Bobsled, Altenberg, Germany (taped)
BOWLING
1 p.m.
FOX — PBA: The U.S. Open, Lincoln, Neb.
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN'S)
12 p.m.
CBSSN — American at Boston
ESPNU — Temple at East Carolina
FS1 — Penn State at Indiana
1 p.m.
BTN — Rutgers at Wisconsin
ESPN — Wichita State at Cincinnati
2 p.m.
CBS — St. John's at Seton Hall
CBSSN — South Florida at Connecticut
ESPNU — Southern Illinois at Northern Iowa
3 p.m.
BTN — Minnesota at Northwestern
4 p.m.
CBS — Maryland at Ohio State
CBSSN — New Mexico at Boise State
FS1 — Butler at Creighton
6 p.m.
ACCN — Miami at Notre Dame
ESPNU — Southern California at Utah
8 p.m.
ESPNU — Stanford at Washington State
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (WOMEN'S)
12 p.m.
ACCN — Syracuse at Notre Dame
ESPN2 — Vanderbilt at Tennessee
2 p.m.
ACCN — Virginia at Virginia Tech
ESPN2 — South Carolina at Kentucky
SECN — Alabama at Mississippi State
4 p.m.
ACCN — Florida State at Georgia Tech
ESPN2 — Auburn at Texas A&M
ESPNU — Tulane at Cincinnati
SECN — Arkansas at Florida
5 p.m.
BTN — Michigan at Michigan State
6 p.m.
SECN — Mississippi at Missouri
COLLEGE GYMNASTICS (WOMEN'S)
2 p.m.
PAC-12N — Stanford at Arizona
4 p.m.
PAC-12N — Washington at Arizona State
6 p.m.
ESPN2 — Utah at UCLA
COLLEGE WRESTLING
8 p.m.
BTN — Oklahoma State at Iowa
GOLF
1 p.m.
GOLF — PGA Tour: The WGC-Mexico Championship, Final Round, Naucalpan, Mexico
2:30 p.m.
GOLF — PGA Tour: The Puerto Rico Open, Final Round, Río Grande, Puerto Rico
NBC — PGA Tour: The WGC-Mexico Championship, Final Round, Naucalpan, Mexico
MLB BASEBALL
1 p.m.
MLBN — Spring Training: NY Yankees vs. Tampa Bay, Tampa, Fla.
NBA BASKETBALL
3:30 p.m.
ABC — Boston at LA Lakers
6 p.m.
NBATV — Minnesota at Denver
8:30 p.m.
NBATV — New Orleans at Golden State
NHL HOCKEY
12 p.m.
NBC — Pittsburgh at Washington
7:30 p.m.
NBCSN — St. Louis at Minnesota
10 p.m.
NBCSN — Vegas at Anaheim
RODEO
12:30 p.m.
CBS — PBR: The U.S. Border Patrol Invitational, St. Louis (taped)
8 p.m.
CBSSN — PBR: The U.S. Border Patrol Invitational, St. Louis (taped)
RUGBY
12:30 p.m.
NBCSN — IRL: England vs. Ireland, Six Nations Championship, Twickenham, England (taped)
4:30 p.m.
NBCSN — Premiership: Northampton at Exeter (taped)
7 p.m.
FS2 — MLR: New England at San Diego
SKIING
1 a.m. (Monday)
NBCSN — FIS Alpine World Cup: Women's Combined, Crans-Montana, Switzerland (taped)
SOCCER (MEN'S)
6:25 a.m.
ESPN2 — Serie A: Lazio at Genoa
8:55 a.m.
NBCSN — Premier League: Watford at Manchester United
9 a.m.
CNBC — Premier League: Norwich City at Wolverhampton
9:30 a.m.
FS1 — Bundesliga: FC Augsburg at Bayer Leverkusen
11:25 a.m.
NBCSN — Premier League: Everton at Arsenal
11:50 a.m.
FS2 — Bundesliga: FSV Mainz at VfL Wolfsburg
TENNIS
6 a.m.
TENNIS — ATP/WTA: Delray-ATP, Marseille-ATP, Doha-WTA – Singles & Doubles Finals, Doha-WTA Early Rounds
3 p.m.
TENNIS — ATP: Delray-ATP, Rio de Janeiro-ATP
5 a.m. (Monday)
TENNIS — ATP/WTA: Dubai-ATP, Santiago-ATP, Doha-WTA
6 a.m. (Monday)
TENNIS — ATP/WTA: Dubai-ATP, Santiago-ATP, Doha-WTA
XFL FOOTBALL
3 p.m.
ESPN — New York at St. Louis
6 p.m.
FS1 — D.C. at Los Angeles

SCOREBOARD

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	40	15	.727	—
Boston	38	16	.704	1½
Phila.	35	21	.625	5½
Brooklyn	25	29	.463	14½
New York	17	38	.309	23

Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	35	20	.636	—
Orlando	24	31	.436	11
Washington	20	33	.377	14
Charlotte	19	36	.345	16
Atlanta	16	41	.281	20

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	47	8	.855	—
Indiana	32	23	.582	15
Chicago	19	37	.339	28½
Detroit	19	39	.328	29½
Cleveland	14	40	.259	32½

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	35	20	.636	—
Dallas	33	22	.600	2
Memphis	28	27	.509	7
San Antonio	23	31	.426	11½
New Orleans	23	32	.418	12

Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Denver	38	17	.691	—
Utah	36	18	.667	1½
Oklahoma City	33	22	.600	5
Portland	25	31	.446	13½
Minnesota	16	37	.302	21

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	41	12	.774	—
L.A. Clippers	37	18	.673	5
Sacramento	22	33	.400	20
Phoenix	22	33	.400	20
Golden State	12	44	.214	30½

Thursday's Games
Milwaukee 126, Detroit 106
Atlanta 129, Miami 124
Charlotte 103, Chicago 93
Phila. 112, Brooklyn 104, OT
Sacramento 129, Memphis 125
Houston 135, Golden State 105
Friday's Games
Cleveland at Washington
Dallas at Orlando
Indiana at New York
Phoenix at Toronto
Boston at Minnesota
Denver at Oklahoma City
San Antonio at Utah
Memphis at L.A. Lakers
New Orleans at Portland
Saturday's Games
Sacramento at L.A. Clippers, 3:30 p.m.
Brooklyn at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Dallas at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Cleveland at Miami, 8 p.m.
Phoenix at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Phila. at Milwaukee, 8:30 p.m.
Houston at Utah, 9 p.m.
Sunday's Games
Boston at L.A. Lakers, 3:30 p.m.
Indiana at Toronto, 6 p.m.
Minnesota at Denver, 6 p.m.
San Antonio at Oklahoma City, 7 p.m.
Washington at Chicago, 7 p.m.
New Orleans at Golden State, 8:30 p.m.
Detroit at Portland, 9 p.m.
Monday's Games
Atlanta at Phila., 7 p.m.
Miami at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
Milwaukee at Washington, 7 p.m.
Orlando at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
New York at Houston, 8 p.m.
Minnesota at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Utah, 9 p.m.
Memphis at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Standings through Thursday

ATLANTIC COAST CONFERENCE

	Conference			All Games		
	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct
Louisville	13	3	.813	22	5	.815
Duke	12	3	.800	22	4	.846
Florida St.	12	3	.800	22	4	.846
Virginia	10	5	.667	18	7	.720
NC State	8	7	.533	17	9	.654
Notre Dame	7	8	.467	16	10	.615
Syracuse	7	8	.467	14	12	.538
Clemson	7	8	.467	13	12	.520
Georgia Tech	7	8	.467	13	13	.500
Boston College	7	9	.438	13	14	.481
Virginia Tech	6	9	.400	15	11	.577
Pittsburgh	6	10	.375	15	12	.556
Miami	6	10	.375	14	12	.538
Wake Forest	4	12	.250	11	15	.423
North Carolina	3	12	.200	10	16	.385

Saturday's Games
Virginia at Pittsburgh, Noon
North Carolina at Louisville, 4 p.m.
Florida St. at NC State, 4 p.m.
Georgia Tech at Syracuse, 4 p.m.
Clemson at Boston College, 6 p.m.
Virginia Tech at Duke, 8 p.m.
Sunday's Game
Miami at Notre Dame, 6 p.m.

BIG EAST CONFERENCE

	Conference			All Games		
	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct
Seton Hall	11	3	.786	19	7	.731
Creighton	10	4	.714	21	6	.778
Villanova	9	4	.692	20	6	.769
Providence	8	6	.571	15	12	.556
Marquette	7	6	.538	17	8	.680
Butler	7	7	.500	19	8	.704
Xavier	6	7	.462	17	9	.654
Georgetown	5	8	.385	15	11	.577
St. John's	3	10	.231	14	12	.538
DePaul	1	12	.077	13	13	.500

Saturday's Games
Marquette at Providence, Noon
Villanova at Xavier, 2:30 p.m.
Georgetown at DePaul, 9 p.m.
Sunday's Games
St. John's at Seton Hall, 2 p.m.
Butler at Creighton, 4 p.m.

BIG TEN CONFERENCE

	Conference			All Games		
	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct
Maryland	12	3	.800	22	4	.846
Penn St.	10	5	.667	20	6	.769
Iowa	10	6	.625	19	8	.704
Michigan St.	10	6	.625	18	9	.667
Illinois	9	6	.600	17	9	.654
Wisconsin	9	6	.600	16	10	.615
Rutgers	9	7	.563	18	9	.667
Michigan	8	7	.533	17	9	.654
Indiana	7	8	.467	17	9	.654
Ohio St.	7	8	.467	17	9	.654
Purdue	7	9	.438	14	13	.519
Minnesota	6	9	.400	12	13	.480
Nebraska	2	13	.133	7	19	.269
Northwestern	1	14	.067	6	19	.240

Thursday's Games
Iowa 85, Ohio St. 76
Michigan St. 86, Nebraska 65
Saturday's Game
Michigan at Purdue, 2 p.m.
Sunday's Games
Penn St. at Indiana, Noon
Rutgers at Wisconsin, 1 p.m.
Minnesota at Northwestern, 3 p.m.
Maryland at Ohio St., 4 p.m.

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Boston	61	38	11	12	88	201	147
Tampa Bay	61	40	16	5	85	218	164
Toronto	62	32	22	8	72	217	204
Florida	61	32	23	6	70	214	207
Montreal	63	28	27	8	64	191	195
Buffalo	60	27	25	8	62	175	190
Ottawa	61	21	29	11	53	164	209
Detroit	62	15	43	4	34	127	232

Metropolitan Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Pittsburgh	59	37	16	6	80	196	158
Washington	60	37	17	6	80	211	184
Philadelphia	61	34	20	7	75	202	181
Columbus	62	30	19	13	73	159	159
Carolina	59	34	21	4	72	193	164
N.Y. Islanders	59	33	20	6	72	168	162
N.Y. Rangers	59	31	24	4	66	195	184
New Jersey	60	23	27	10	56	164	208

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Central Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
St. Louis	61	34	17	10	78	191	172
Dallas	60	35	19	6	76	164	153
Colorado	59	34	18	7	75	209	165
Winnipeg	62	32	25	5	69	190	185
Nashville	59	29	23	7	65	190	191
Minnesota	59	28	24	7	63	180	190
Chicago	60	26	26	8	60	179	194

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Vegas	62	32	22	8	72	197	188
Edmonton	60	32	21	7	71	191	185
Vancouver	60	32	22	6	70	194	184
Calgary	61	31	24	6	68	180	190
Arizona	64	30	26	8	68	174	171
San Jose	60	26	30	4	56	156	196
Anaheim	60	24	29	7	55	156	190
Los Angeles	61	22	34	5	49	153	197

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.
Thursday's Games
Toronto 4, Pittsburgh 0
Montreal 4, Washington 3, OT
New Jersey 2, San Jose 1
Philadelphia 4, Columbus 3, OT
Winnipeg 5, Ottawa 1
St. Louis 1, Arizona 0
Vegas 5, Tampa Bay 3
Los Angeles 5, Florida 4
Friday's Games
N.Y. Rangers at Carolina
Detroit at N.Y. Islanders
Nashville at Chicago
St. Louis at Dallas
Boston at Calgary
Minnesota at Edmonton
Colorado at Anaheim
Saturday's Games
Buffalo at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
Washington at New Jersey, 1 p.m.
Winnipeg at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.
Carolina at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Montreal at Ottawa, 7 p.m.
San Jose at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m.
Columbus at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Arizona, 8 p.m.
Boston at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Florida at Vegas, 10 p.m.
Colorado at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.
Sunday's Games
Pittsburgh at Washington, 12 p.m.
Chicago at Dallas, 3 p.m.
Winnipeg at Buffalo, 3 p.m.
San Jose at N.Y. Islanders, 5 p.m.
Calgary at Detroit, 7 p.m.
St. Louis at Minnesota, 7:30 p.m.
Edmonton at Los Angeles, 10 p.m.
Vegas at Anaheim, 10 p.m.
Monday's Game
Ottawa at Columbus, 7 p.m.

MLB

Remaining Free Agents
AMERICAN LEAGUE
NEW YORK (AP) — The 27 remaining free agents:
BALTIMORE (1) — Mark Trumbo, dh-of-1b.
BOSTON (2) — Andrew Cashner, rhp; Steve Pearce, 1b-of.
CLEVELAND (2) — Ryan Flaherty, inf; Yasiel Puig, of.
HOUSTON (1) — Collin McHugh, rhp.
NEW YORK (1) — CC Sabathia, lhp.
SEATTLE (1) — Arodys Vizcaíno, rhp.
TEXAS (1) — Shawn Kelley, rhp.
TORONTO (1) — Clay Buchholz, rhp.
NATIONAL LEAGUE
ATLANTA (1) — Brian McCann, c.
CHICAGO (3) — Tony Barnette, rhp; Xavier Cedeño, lhp; Ben Zobrist, inf-of.
LOS ANGELES (2) — David Freese, 3b; Russell Martin, c.
MIAMI (1) — Martín Prado, 1b-3b.
MILWAUKEE (1) — Matt Albers, rhp.
PHILADELPHIA (2) — Pat Neshek, rhp; Jason Vargas, lhp.
PITTSBURGH (2) — Melky Cabrera, of; Lonnie Chisenhall, of.
ST. LOUIS (1) — Tony Cingrani, lhp.
WASHINGTON (4) — Brian Dozier, 2b; Jeremy Hellickson, rhp; Fernando Rodney, rhp; Jonny Venters, lhp.

TRANSACTIONS

FOOTBALL
National Football League
MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Named Roy Anderson assistant defensive backs coach and Imarjaye Albury as defensive quality control/assistant defensive line coach.
HOCKEY
National Hockey League
DALLAS STARS — Reassigned LW Joel Kiviranta to the Texas Stars (AHL)
DETROIT RED WINGS — Recalled D Brian Lashoff from the Grand Rapids Griffins(AHL). Placed D Filip Hronek on injured reserve.
LOS ANGELES KINGS — Recalled F Gabriel Vilardi from the Ontario Reign (AHL).

Lake Placid celebrates its Olympic past, eyes its future

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

LAKE PLACID, N.Y. — The benefits of a miracle have been reaped in Lake Placid for 40 years.

The plan now is to keep those miracles – and miracle-seekers – coming.

Parts of Lake Placid's sports landscape are largely under construction again these days, a plan that walks a tightrope between preserving the area's natural beauty and small-town charm while finding ways keep the village a major player on the global winter sports map and being modern enough to keep drawing athletes to town.

Tourism is a $1.2 billion industry in the Lake Placid region, much of it still fueled by the memory of the U.S. hockey team beating the Soviet Union as the "Miracle on Ice" highlight of the 1980 Olympic Games.

"It's a special place," said two-time Olympic alpine skiing medalist Andrew Weibrecht, who now helps his family operate the famed Mirror Lake Inn Resort and Spa in Lake Placid. "Between all the venues and the Olympic Training Center, having that level of athletes all together in one place, training together even though they're not all in the same sports, it brings everyone up."

The trick is to keep people coming to Lake Placid. And state officials are investing tens of millions to make sure that happens – a plan to keep the 1932 and 1980 Olympic village vital, unlike many other past Winter Olympic sites that are mostly forgotten.

Bobsled and skeleton athletes are heading to Lake Placid next year for their world championships, and they'll be greeted by a new base lodge – under construction now – and an indoor ice push facility for training. USA Luge will play host to World Cup racing again next winter, as it does most every year in Lake Placid. And there's been a major push to get ready for the 2023 World University Games, where more than 2,000 athletes are expected.

New York state has earmarked well over $100 million toward Lake Placid in the last couple of years for new facilities and improving existing ones – everything from the ski jumps to nordic trails to the Olympic Center itself. Gov. Andrew Cuomo's budget proposal that was released last month calls for $147 million more to back an "upgrade and modernization plan to support improvements to the Olympic facilities and ski resorts."

Cuomo touts the investments as ways to promote tourism, economic growth and job creation. But upgrading what's already in Lake Placid also protects the village's legacy.

"It's a shame that the state and a lot of places in this country don't understand how beautiful this gem is because it is internationally special," Cuomo said. "It's not just special within the state, within the country. It is internationally special and generations before us understood that."

Consider the Mount Van Hoevenberg complex, a few miles outside of the village. Crews are working there throughout the frigid winter to build the next phase of Lake Placid's venue offerings – the base lodge near the bobsled track, a revamped biathlon facility, better trails and more.

What's happening in Lake Placid is a far cry from what's taking place at some of the places that followed it as a Winter Olympic host: Sarajevo's bobsled track is now a bullet-riddled, graffiti-covered remnant of war; Calgary's bobsled track from 1988 was closed last year and parts of it have since been demolished; Nagano's track from 1998 is closed, and so is the Cesana Pariol track from the 2006 Turin Games. Even Pyeongchang, which played host to the most recent Winter Olympics two years ago, has drawn criticism for overestimating what the long-term tourism payoff would be. Not Lake Placid.

It is simply bustling, 40 years later.

"As we see cities plan the building for an Olympics and plan the teardown at the same time, I think our being able to maintain and use all of our Olympic venues is unique and we are lucky to have that," said Jill Cardinale, the mother of USA Luge athlete Duncan Segger and the owner of The Pines Inn in Lake Placid.

There are movements every few years to form a committee and explore another Olympic bid, but those efforts are mostly nostalgic. The Olympics are simply too big in their current form to be hosted by a small village, and if there's blame to be issued there some of it, ironically, could be directed at Lake Placid because interest in the Winter Games soared after what happened in 1980.

"Every once in a while, you can be sitting on the bench of the rink and you look around and think," said retired USA Luge star Erin Hamlin, a world champion and Olympic medalist. "It's a special place, for sure."

Sarajevo in 1984 had 19 percent more athletes than Lake Placid did. Calgary, in 1988, had 33 percent more athletes than Lake Placid. By the time the Olympics got to Albertville in 1992, the number of competitors was up 68 percent over 1980. Nagano in 1998 had more than double the athletes from 1980, and the Beijing Games in 2022 could be the first to top 3,000 winter competitors – which would roughly triple Lake Placid.

Sports have been added since, the television deal is now measured in billions instead of millions and the evolution of security for both athletes and spectators make the logistics of another Olympics in a place like Lake Placid – where there's basically one main drag through the center of town – impossible.

Everything else, like World Cups, world championships and the World University Games, remain within reach and have been clearly prioritized. Lake Placid has been a major piece of the winter sports puzzle globally for a century and has no plans on giving up that spot anytime soon.

"You look at all the roles that everyone played within this community to make that Olympics happen," said figure skater Scott Hamilton, who carried the U.S. flag into the opening ceremony in 1980. "Sarajevo was bigger and then you got into Calgary, which was gigantic and it just sort of like spiked. But I think Lake Placid and what happened here really ignited greater interest in the Winter Olympics. I really think we could see the miraculous things that happened."

If Lake Placid gets its way, more miracles await.

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U.S., others pull out of Luge World Cup, citing safety

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

USA Luge said it is pulling its team out of this weekend's World Cup luge races in Winterberg, Germany, adding to a chorus of athletes from many nations protesting what they are calling unsafe ice conditions.

Austria has also withdrawn its team from the weekend events and even several sliders from Germany – on home ice, no less – have said they are not willing to race this weekend. The International Luge Federation offered a compromise of sorts Friday by saying it would shorten the race distances, but even that did not solve the intense disagreement between sliders and officials over the safety issue.

"Based on the feedback from our athletes and coaches, we will not participate in the Winterberg World Cup," USA Luge said in a statement Friday. "We respect their opinions that conditions are not safe. The entire Austrian team has walked away, as well as some Germans and Russians, including Olympic medalists and World Cup leaders, who are also not racing."

However, two U.S. sliders – Tucker West and Jonny Gustafson – did compete later Friday in a Nations Cup race, which serves as a qualifier for the World Cup over the weekend. It was not immediately clear if they planned to compete this weekend.

Sliders from many nations have said there is too much ice buildup on certain track curves, which significantly increases the chance of crashing.

Training this weekend in Winterberg has been marred by several crashes and even some injuries to top sliders. The German doubles team of Tobias Wendl and Tobias Arlt – one of the best and most accomplished teams in the history of the sport – wrote on their shared Facebook page that the risk of crashing was "extremely high and therefore incalculable."

"Not only are track conditions less than ideal but this was brought to the attention of the FIL and yet again we were told that everything is OK," said USA Luge veteran Chris Mazdzer, the 2018 Olympic men's silver medalist. "It is always OK. For the last 15 years everything has been OK. ... Everything is not OK."

All three of the top German doubles sleds have said they will not compete this weekend. The entire Austrian luge team, including Olympic men's champion David Gleirscher, said Thursday that it was going home. Top Russian men's slider Roman Repilov also was considering skipping this weekend.

Gleirscher crashed during a training run, and his mind was made up right there.

"I was lucky in my training crash and don't want to take the risk a second time," Gleirscher said.

Mazdzer was planning to skip at least one of his two races this weekend before the American federation decided to pull out en masse.

"We are racing drivers, want to compete with others at the highest level and love this thrill," German doubles team Robin Johannes Geueke and David Gamm wrote on their Instagram page, explaining why they pulled out of a World Cup on their home track. "But as much as we were looking forward to it here, we have to decide just as sensibly that health is not only in the foreground and not only of us but of all other athletes."

The de facto boycott by some athletes will have an impact on who winds up winning the season World Cup men's, women's and doubles championships. Winterberg is the next-to-last race on the World Cup schedule, followed by the finale next weekend in Konigssee, Germany.

Repilov leads the men's standings by 61 points over Italy's Dominik Fischnaller. Tatiana Ivanova of Russia leads Germany's Julia Taubitz by 12 points in the women's race. Germany's Toni Eggert and Sascha Benecken lead Wendl and Arlt by 10 points in the race for the doubles title.

With 100 points awarded for a win, the standings could have shifted wildly this weekend.

"In our eyes, the track is not suitable," Austria coach Rene Friedl said.

Nations Cup races in men's, women's and doubles events were held Friday as scheduled. Only five doubles sleds competed, compared with 15 that were in the Nations Cup doubles race at the most recent World Cup earlier this month.

USA Luge women's slider Brittney Arndt said she did not think the FIL handled athletes' concerns – which had been voiced throughout the week – the right way.

"There are small nations who have no choice but to race to secure funding or for other reasons," Arndt said.

This month marked the 10th anniversary of the most recent on-track luge fatality, the death of Georgian athlete Nodar Kumaritashvili during a training run hours before the opening ceremony of the 2010 Vancouver Olympics.

Tokyo delays Olympic volunteer training because of virus

TOKYO (AP) — While again stating there are no plans to cancel or delay the Tokyo Olympics, local organizers postponed training sessions for volunteers on Friday for at least two months because of the virus outbreak spreading from China.

About 80,000 people are needed at the Olympics to provide free work which the IOC calls "key support to ensure the success of the games."

Tokyo organizers said the postponed sessions are "part of efforts to prevent the spread of infection of the novel coronavirus."

Training will be postponed until May or later, organizers said on their website. More than 200,000 people applied to be volunteers, with about one-third from outside Japan. The Olympics are scheduled to run from July 24-Aug. 9.

The International Olympic Committee, local organizers and the World Health Organization have repeatedly said there is no current need to put the games in doubt.

The virus, known as COVID-19, has caused the deaths of about 2,250 people since it emerged in the Chinese city Wuhan late last year. Up to Friday, three deaths and more than 700 cases – most from a quarantined cruise ship docked in Tokyo Bay – had been reported in Japan.

"There are no considerations of canceling the games nor will the postponements of these (training) activities have an impact on the overall games preparation," Tokyo organizers said.

Still, plans for some Olympic-related promotions and preparation could change.

"In accordance with the government's policy for preventing the spread of infectious diseases, we will also evaluate the immediate need for each games-related event on a case by case basis," organizers said.

APACHES

From page B1

increase in efficiency. From the field, Brown is shooting a career-best 54 percent while his 43 percent three-point percentage is tied for the best mark from range. HIs 188 three-point attempts are already second-most in a season in his career as he's well on pace for a career-high in that category as well. At the line, he's a 92 percent free throw shooter for his career and 88 percent this season.

His best single-game performance of the season came in a loss to Winchester in mid-January when he scored 54 points on 8-of-19 shooting from range. He's scored at least 25 points in every game this season and has scored less than 30 points just five times.

The biggest difference this season for the Bruins has been contributions from the non-Brown players. As a team, Blackford is shooting 38 percent from three-point territory this season, an improvement over last season.

So while the Apaches bring back a host of players that defended Brown last season, the gameplan will change this time around.

"I watched him play about two weeks ago, three weeks ago and, obviously, everyone gets better," Wright said. "He's better than he was last year. Our biggest thing with him is we can't get him on the free throw line because he doesn't miss. Last year, we did a really good job at their place of not fouling. I think he only shot two or three free throws. We'll let him shoot the two-pointer but we don't want to make it a three-point play because it's automatic.

"We're going to try to defend him a little bit the same but they also have some shooters around him they didn't have last year. They had shooters around him last year but they didn't have four guys out there that could shoot the three. We're not going to be able to defend him quite the same way as we did last year."

Last season against Wabash, Brown finished with 33 points but shot 13-of-32 from the field and 2-of-10 from beyond the arc. Brown got to the line just five times, making each attempt.

In the contest, the likes of Trenton Daughtry, Dereck Vogel, Jared Holley, Jasper Walter and Logan Vander Velden all had spells defending Brown, eventually wearing Brown down late in the game as the Apaches pulled away for a 75-53 win.

As big as Saturday's contest will be, the Apaches had an equally impactful game against Whitko on the road on Friday with a chance to clinch a share of the Three Rivers Conference title. While results were unavailable as of Plain Dealer deadline, Wright viewed Friday's game as a warm-up for Saturday.

"Luckily for us, Whitko shoots a lot of threes," he said. "They have a lot of really good guards. It's not like we're playing a team that's 6'8", 6'9" on Friday and then come back on Saturday. We'll be bigger than Blackford. But we'll be bigger than Whitko. It's kind of nice that we have Whitko before and a big game there then another big game. After Saturday night, our guys will be tired."

While a sellout is not necessarily anticipated at Coolman Gymnasium on Saturday, it is likely to be a packed house for the Apaches. On top of being Senior Night, the Bruin fanbase has gained a reputation as one of the more loyal ones with home games routinely selling out, particularly since Brown's arrival.

The varsity game is set for a 7:30 p.m. with the JV set to start at 6 p.m.

SOCCER

From page B1

during periods of injury, access to a retirement plan, multiple bonuses and more."

Molly Levinson, spokeswoman for the plaintiffs, disputed the federation's assertions.

"In the most recent CBA negotiation, USSF repeatedly said that equal pay was not an option regardless of pay structure," Levinson said in a statement. "USSF proposed a 'pay to play structure' with less pay across the board. In every instance for a friendly or competitive match, the women players were offered less pay that their male counterparts. This is the very definition of gender discrimination, and of course the players rejected it."

The lawsuit has drawn worldwide attention. When the U.S. won the World Cup final last summer in France, fans in the crowd chanted "Equal Pay! Equal Pay!"

Earlier this month, the players union for the men's national team urged the federation to sharply increase pay for the women's team, while also accusing the governing body of making low-ball offers in current contract negotiations with the men's team.

Also among the documents filed Thursday were numerous pre-trial depositions. Megan Rapinoe, the reigning FIFA Player of the Year, was deposed Jan. 16. She said Russell Sawyer, an outside lawyer for the USSF, stated during a bargaining session in June 2016 that "market realities are such that the women do not deserve to be paid equally to the men."

USSF President Carlos Cordeiro was asked during a Jan. 29 deposition about a statement he made when campaigning that "our female players have not been treated equally."

"I felt then and I still feel to a degree, that the lack of opportunity for our female players was really what was at the root of some of their issues," Cordeiro said. "The fact that the Women's World Cup generates a fraction of revenue and a fraction of what the men get paid is a reflection, frankly, of lack of opportunity. ... Women's soccer outside of the United States doesn't have the same degree of respect."

Former USSF President Sunil Gulati, speaking during a Dec. 17 deposition, discussed the distinctions between men's and women's soccer.

"There is an absolute difference, which not everyone seemed to agree to, but do I think that it's less attractive or less entertaining? I'm not saying that. Or relative quality, I'm not saying that," he said. "But I'm also not saying, in terms of absolute level of – whether it's speed or strength, they're the same. I think most people would accept that, too."

A U.S. man who was on the roster for all 16 qualifiers during the failed effort to reach the 2018 World Cup earned $179,375 in payments from the U.S. Soccer Federation.

An American woman received $52,500 for being on the roster for the five World Cup qualifiers last year plus $147,500 for her time at the World Cup, including a $37,500 roster bonus and $110,000 for winning the title in France.

The USSF keeps 16-21 women's players under contract in each year of the current labor deal, which runs through 2021, and pays each a $100,000 salary. The federation also pays a minimum 22 players assigned to a club in the National Women's Soccer League, with each receiving $70,000 to $75,000 this year.

Women receive 75 percent of salary on maternity leave for up to one year, and a player has the longer of three months or two training camps to return to full fitness. A player can receive 75 percent of salary for up to three months when adopting a child and a $50 daily stipend for child care during training and play. The USSF also pays for health, dental and vision insurance for the women.

When the men last qualified for the World Cup in 2014, their player pool got a $2 million payment, and each player earned $55,000 for making the roster and $5,500 per match. The player pool earned $175,000 per point for the group phase, a total of $700,000, plus $3.6 million for reaching the round of 16.

The USSF in its filing pointed out it received $9 million from FIFA for the men reaching the second round of the 2014 World Cup, but $2 million for the women winning in 2015 and $4 million for their victory in 2019.

There is parity is per diems: the women get $62.50 daily while in the U.S. and $75 internationally, the same as the men received under terms of their expired deal that covered 2015-18. And men and women both receive $1.50 per paid attendance for home matches controlled by the USSF.

Indiana looks for home win vs No. 9 Penn State

No. 9 Penn State (20-6, 10-5) vs. Indiana (17-9, 7-8)

Assembly Hall, Bloomington, Indiana; Sunday, 12 p.m. EST

BOTTOM LINE: Indiana looks for its fourth straight win over No. 9 Penn State at Assembly Hall. The last victory for the Nittany Lions at Indiana was a 66-65 win on Feb. 12, 2014.

TEAM LEADERSHIP: Indiana's Trayce Jackson-Davis has averaged 14.1 points and eight rebounds while Justin Smith has put up 10.8 points and 5.3 rebounds. For the Nittany Lions, Lamar Stevens has averaged 17.5 points and 6.8 rebounds while Mike Watkins has put up 9.9 points, 7.9 rebounds and 2.5 blocks.

LIKEABLE LAMAR: Stevens has connected on 27.6 percent of the 76 3-pointers he's attempted and has made 6 of 17 over his last five games. He's also made 73.9 percent of his foul shots this season.

STREAK STATS: Penn State has won its last four road games, scoring 77.8 points, while allowing 68.3 per game.

ASSIST DISTRIBUTION: The Nittany Lions have recently created baskets via assists more often than the Hoosiers. Indiana has 38 assists on 80 field goals (47.5 percent) across its previous three contests while Penn State has assists on 50 of 77 field goals (64.9 percent) during its past three games.

DID YOU KNOW: Indiana attempts more free throws per game than any other Big Ten team. The Hoosiers have averaged 23.3 free throws per game this season.

Heat retiring Dwyane Wade's No. 3 this weekend

MIAMI (AP) — Dwyane Wade says that whenever he would hear the national anthem play before Miami home games, he would take a moment and look to the rafters.

"I always imagined my jersey being up there," Wade said.

He will no longer have to imagine the sight. After this weekend, it'll be there for good.

Wade will become the fifth Heat player to get his number retired by the team, joining Alonzo Mourning, Tim Hardaway, Shaquille O'Neal and Chris Bosh. A three-day celebration of Wade's time in Miami starts on Friday, a weekend highlighted by his No. 3 formally going to the rafters on Saturday night when the Heat play host to the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Wade spent 16 seasons in the NBA, 14½ of those with the Heat. He was one of two players to be part of all three Heat championship teams – Udonis Haslem, whose No. 40 will almost certainly be retired by the team one day, is the other.

It was never a question of whether Wade's jersey was going to be retired by the Heat, only a question of when. He's the franchise's all-time leader in points, games, assists and steals and is probably going to keep most, if not all, of those records for a very long time. Consider: He scored 21,556 regular-season points with the Heat, and Alonzo Mourning is second with 9.459.

Earlier this season, Los Angeles Clippers coach Doc Rivers – like Wade, a Chicago native who went on to play at Marquette – said he believes Wade doesn't get enough credit for what he did as a player, especially in the NBA Finals.

"He's been underrated his whole life," Rivers said. "He didn't get recruited very highly. Took Marquette to a Final Four. He still didn't go as high as he should have in the draft and then he took the Miami Heat to NBA championships. That's just who he is."

Wade was the 2006 NBA Finals MVP, was selected to 13 All-Star Games in his 16 seasons, was an All-Star MVP in 2010 and won an Olympic gold medal.

"Every time I look up to the rafters and see your #3 hanging there, I'll think of the impact you had not only on this organization, this city and this league, but on my life," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra wrote in an open letter to Wade that will be part of the team's game-night giveaway program for fans on Saturday.

The weekend also includes a night of tribute speeches on Friday and a showing of a documentary about Wade on Sunday.

MLB

From page B1

anticipate this or that, but you don't really know until you get there. So I'm not really worried about the reception."

While the Astros get peppered daily with questions about their cheating and are constantly being asked to comment on the negative reactions of players around the league, their spring training facility-mates are still basking in the glow of their championship.

On Thursday night, the Nationals continued celebrating their victory with a championship parade in downtown West Palm Beach. Fans cheered as players and staff rode down the street showing off their trophy.

"In 2019 we were the best," manager Dave Martinez told the crowd at the end of the parade. "We were No. 1. We were the world champs and I want to thank all of you for sticking behind us."

Max Scherzer will start Saturday for the Nationals. He started and threw five innings in Washington's 6-2 win in Game 7 that gave the franchise its first title.

The 35-year-old said he's right where he needs to be and is feeling good as he prepares for his spring debut.

"Max is going to go out there and hopefully get them through the first inning, see how he feels, and if he can get out there for the second inning, that'd be great," Martinez said. "We'll cross that bridge when we get there. Right now, it's just about feel and seeing where they're at."

Saturday's game will also pit Baker against the team that let him go after the 2017 season.

He's looking forward to seeing many of the people he worked with when he managed the Nationals from 2016-17. And even though it's the first game, he knows Scherzer will be ready to go.

"I'm sure he'll probably be the same old Scherz," Baker said. "He could be pitching at a high school game and he'll be fired up."

While people could come out to heckle the Astros, they likely won't be able to direct their ire at any players who were on the teams that stole signs. Baker said he doesn't plan to play any of Houston's regulars Saturday and wants to give the "kids" a chance to play in the opener.

To that end, right-hander Cristian Javier, who was Houston's minor league pitcher of the year last season, will start for the Astros.

Houston third baseman Alex Bregman, who has taken criticism in recent days for a poorly received apology during a press conference about the sign-stealing, said they can't spend time worrying about how fans will react. But he did say that it's a unique situation to start spring training against the Nationals considering their recent history.

"It's tough to play first against the team that we lost to in the World Series," he said. "But they deserved it. They outplayed us. They have a great team over there and they really earned that World Series title."

Woman is trapped by guilt in an accidental friendship

DEAR ABBY: Years ago, I was friendly with a man from work who was very close to his mom. She came along with us once for lunch and ended up really liking me. From that point on, whenever he and I would get together for lunch, she would tag along.

Dear Abby

At one point, without my permission, he gave her my phone number, and she began calling me. A little has turned into a lot. She contacts me every day via text or phone, almost always to complain about something in her life. She always wants to get together for lunch and is constantly asking me for favors, including rides to work (we do not have the same job or the same hours) or taking care of her dogs and cats while she's away on her various work trips.

I no longer speak to the man, but I speak to his mother every single day. She considers me a dear friend and is a very sensitive person with obvious abandonment issues. My problem is, I have zero desire to be this woman's friend. We are very different in pretty much every way imaginable. I get together with her, respond to her messages, answer her calls and do favors for her out of guilt, not wanting to be yet another person who kicks her to the curb.

How do I handle this? Should I continue to allow her to use me for favors and as a sounding board for all her various complaints, or is there a way to gracefully bow out without breaking this woman's heart? – Walking A Fine Line In Illinois

DEAR WALKING: A way to bow out would be to start weaning her. Do not make yourself available to the extent that you have. Screen your calls and resist the impulse to be so helpful. It's all right to have other plans you need to attend to instead of being at her beck and call every day. This is how people distance themselves gently.

The alternative would be to stop responding at all, which would be cruel. While you are no longer close to her son, contact him, tell him what has been going on and ask if he can help with this.

DEAR ABBY: In the past three weeks or so, a man has placed a flower blossom in a small cup on the edge of my patio. This has happened 18 times. The flowers are, seemingly, from surrounding yards. I live in a golfing community, and many golfers pass by daily. Once, he left a golf ball as well.

As I was looking out one day, I saw a man wearing a red shirt, tan cap and shorts. His cap was pulled low, so I couldn't see his face. He looked to be middle-aged, and he walked away quickly. He has never tried to make contact with me.

My partner is not happy about this, and I'm afraid if he catches the man in action, he may cause a scene. I don't know if I should be flattered or afraid. Also, the man might be shocked to learn that I'm 85. (Well, yes, I am kind of flattered.) What to do, Abby? – Secretly Admired In Florida

DEAR ADMIRED: Here's what I'd do. I would accept the compliment, but I would also leave a note on the edge of the patio addressed to "Secret Admirer." In it I would say that I'm 85 years old and, while flattered, I'm not available – so please stop leaving "gifts" on my patio.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Curve
4 Get the drift
7 Barely makes ends meet
11 Afternoon social
12 Cathedral part
13 Toolbox item
14 — out (relax)
15 Harness gear
16 Matted wool
17 Bills
19 Symbol of peace
20 Prepare to fire
21 Debussy subject
22 Lawful
25 Stout
28 Jackie's second
29 Frizzy coif
31 Monsieur's affirmative
33 Large
34 Mounted
36 Sandy's reply
37 Secreted
40 Jacket features
42 Same old grind
43 Japanese delicacy
44 Society
46 Deduce
49 Herr's abode
50 Ordered
52 Narrow opening
54 Alice's chronicler
55 Drew on
56 Stone or Ice
57 Envelope sealer
58 EMT technique
59 It glistens

DOWN
1 Dune buggy kin
2 Plant in a swamp
3 Hamster's digs
4 Muscular tic
5 PC bailout key
6 Mouse alert
7 Attempt
8 Chicken style
9 Fashion magazine
10 Solidified
12 Hun leader
18 Meadow murmur
19 Bonn article
21 Dairy sounds
22 Chem room
23 Mr. Clapton
24 Billion (pref.)
25 Jab at
26 Mortgage
27 Round dwelling
30 Worry too much
32 Conditions
35 Made level
38 Friday's companion
39 Wheel part
41 Folkloric being
43 Quilt filler
44 Actor — Reiner
45 Humdinger
47 Old-time oath
48 Fly off the handle
49 Harpy
50 Tampa Bay NFLer
51 Serpent
53 Seat for a sermon

Answer to Previous Puzzle

L	A	P		P	L	U	G			M	A	W
I	L	E		H	U	G	E		M	O	D	E
M	O	A		A	G	H	A		A	P	E	D
P	H	R	A	S	E		R	A	T			
	A	L	E	E				I	S	I	S	
			G	R	A	C	E	D		R	A	W
G	O	B	I		M	E	A		G	A	W	K
E	R	O	S		A	D	S		I	N	N	S
L	A	C		C	H	E	E	K	S			
	L	A	D	E				A	T	E	N	
			I	O	N		D	I	S	M	A	L
N	I	C	K		O	L	E	S		O	V	A
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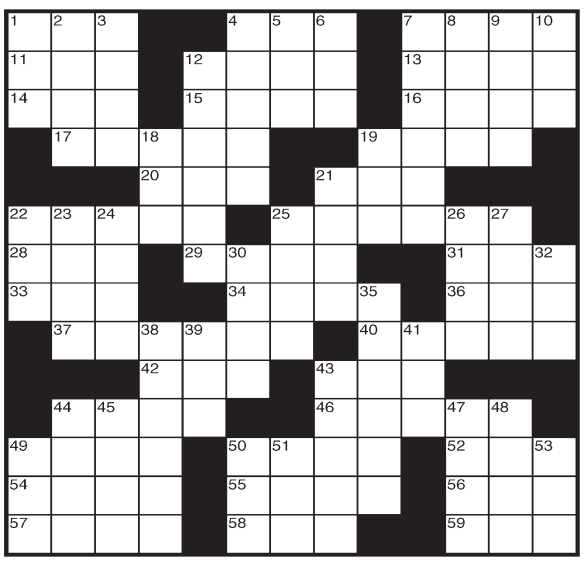

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SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

	5	8		3	1			
	6				4	1		
				9				7
	9			1			7	
4								5
	8			4			6	
1				6				
		5	4				8	
			1	2		9	4	

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How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

8	5	4	9	3	7	1	6	2
7	3	6	4	1	2	5	8	9
1	2	9	8	5	6	3	7	4
2	8	7	6	9	3	4	1	5
5	6	1	7	2	4	9	3	8
4	9	3	1	8	5	7	2	6
3	1	2	5	6	9	8	4	7
9	4	8	2	7	1	6	5	3
6	7	5	3	4	8	2	9	1

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TDHIC

NYIKD

DDDEEW

NMENAR

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

"_____" _____ _____

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: CLOVE EXERT MISHAP HECTIC
Answer: Construction on their house's new addition was almost complete and in the — HOME STRETCH

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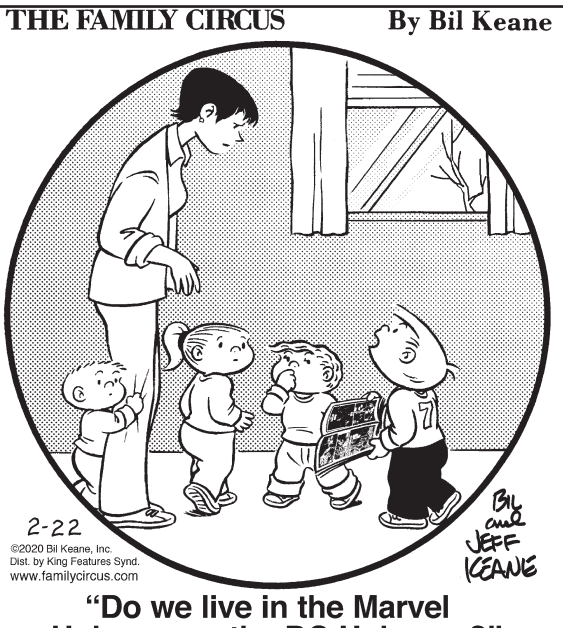
THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



"Do we live in the Marvel Universe or the DC Universe?"

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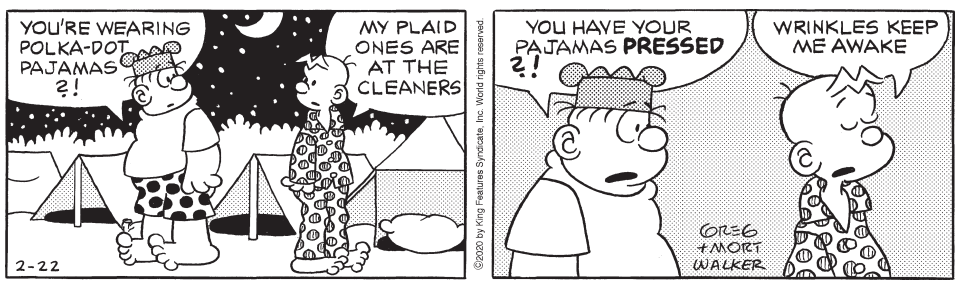
BEETLE BAILEY



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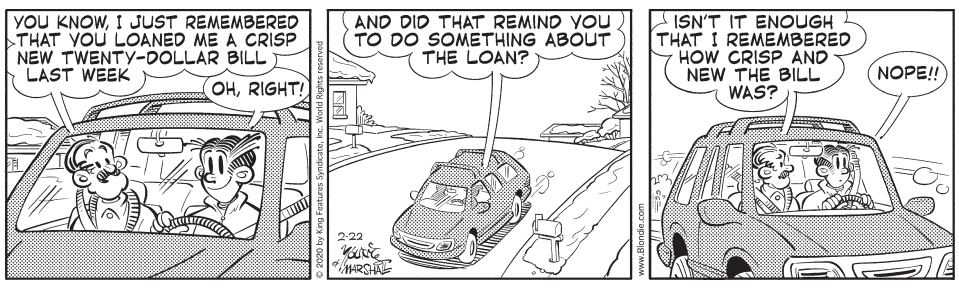

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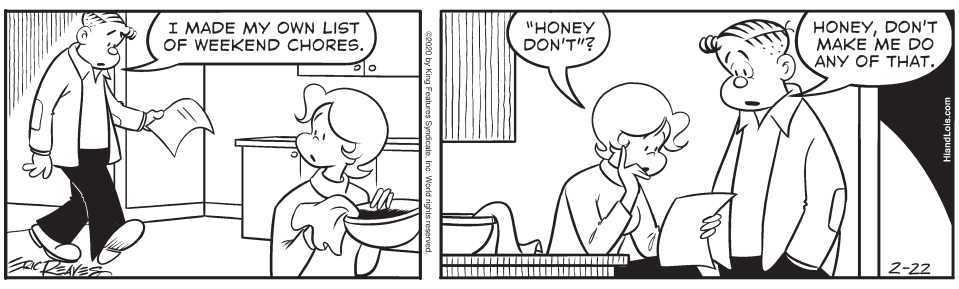

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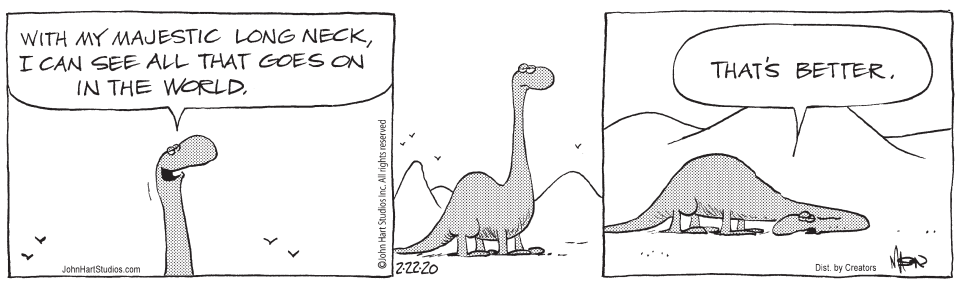

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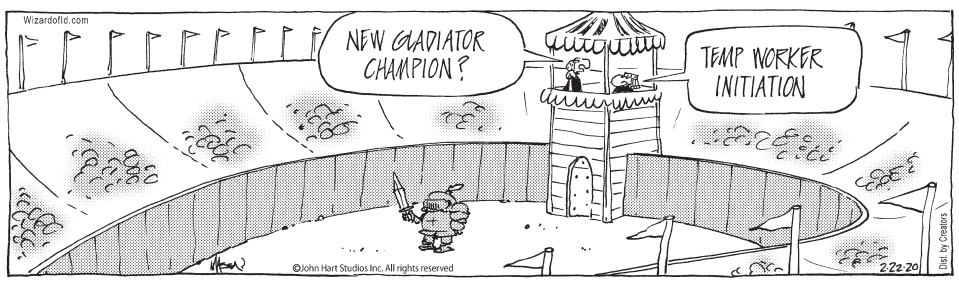

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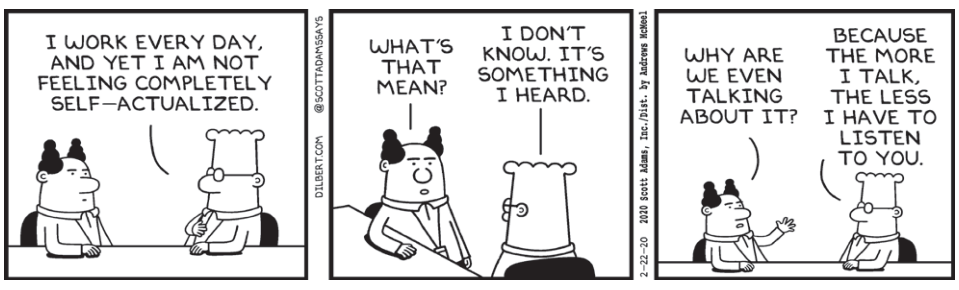

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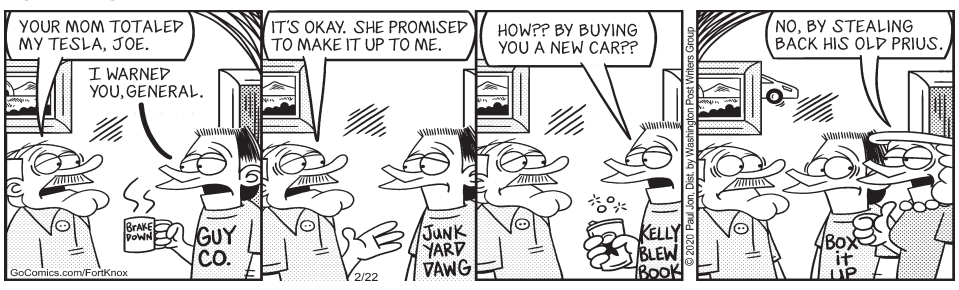


PICKLES

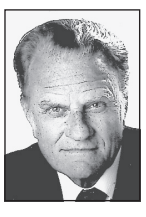
Kingdom of God has only one entrance – and it is Jesus Christ

From the writings of the Rev. Billy Graham.

Q: What does is mean when Jesus calls Himself "the door"? – T.D.

A: Every house and building has at least one entrance. Every nation has points of entry. The children of Israel entered the Promised Land by way of the Jordan River. God had delivered them out of slavery and persecution into a better country, and that entry point still remains today.

Billy Graham
My Answer



The kingdom of God also has an entrance – only one – and it is Jesus Christ. He proclaims, "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved" (John 10:9). The human heart has an entrance as well, but many have it bolted, defiantly refusing to let Christ come in. The Bible says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him" (Revelation 3:20).

God formed our hearts and wants to dwell there, but many have locked theirs up, ignoring the Savior who says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). Still, many refuse His salvation by claiming that they don't believe there is only one way to God.

In 1971, when the crew of Apollo 15 returned to the earth's atmosphere after a journey of nearly 300 hours and almost half a million miles, they had to re-enter the earth's atmosphere through a corridor less than 40 miles wide. That is a narrow passage. This illustrates what Jesus said: "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction" (Matthew 7:13).

Jesus Christ opened Heaven's door for us by His death on the cross and by His resurrection from the grave. When He knocks, do not turn Him away.

CELEBRITY CIPHER
by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"Y XZDKK FDMV YA AZV FIXA DEGVVDJKV BDGA IR FW HSAW AI XASHW FVGYA, DCH GVPDGH AZV JGDNV DCH HVXVGNYCE."
— EVIGEV PDXZYCEAIC

Previous Solution: "Any Australian actor who comes to America is really committed. There are no dabblers — it's all or nothing." — Margot Robbie

TODAY'S CLUE: M equals K

South Korea becomes newest front in shifting virus outbreak

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and MATT SEDENSKY
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — Cases of a new virus swelled Friday in South Korea, making the country the newest front in a widening global outbreak centered in China and now reverberating elsewhere.

South Korea said two people have died and 204 have been infected with the virus, quadruple the number of cases it had two days earlier. Schools were shuttered Friday, churches told worshipers to stay away and some mass gatherings were banned.

The multiplying caseload in South Korea showed the ease with which the illness can spread. Initial infections were linked to China, but new cases in South Korea and Iran – where there have been four deaths – don't show a clear connection to travel there. In an emerging cluster of illnesses in northern Italy, the first to fall ill met with someone who had returned from China on Jan. 21 without experiencing any symptoms of the new virus, health authorities said.

The World Health Organization warned that clusters not directly linked to travel, such as the ones in South Korea and Iran, suggest that time may be running out to contain the outbreak.

"The window of opportunity is still there. But our window of opportunity is narrowing," said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "We need to act quickly before it closes completely."

Tedros singled out Iran's discovery of 18 cases and four deaths in two days – and that a traveler from Iran carried the virus to Lebanon, and another traveler from Iran to Canada.

"These dots are very concerning – take them as dots or trends," he said.

South Korea Prime Minister Chung Se-kyun started a government meeting on the health emergency by saying, "We have entered an emergency phase."

"Our efforts until now had been focused on blocking the illness from entering the country," he said. "But we will now shift the focus on preventing the illness from spreading further in local communities."

Daegu, a southeastern city of 2.5 million that is the country's fourth largest, emerged as the focus of government efforts to contain the disease known as COVID-19, and Chung promised support to ease a shortage in hospital beds, medical personnel and equipment. Mayor Kwon Young-jin of Daegu has urged residents to stay inside, even wearing masks at home, to stem further infection.

The first case in Daegu was reported on Tuesday. By Friday, the city and its surrounding areas had 152, including South Korea's first two fatalities from COVID-19.

Nationwide, the numbers told of a ballooning problem. There were 20 new cases reported Wednesday, 53 on Thursday and 100 on Friday.

The central government declared a "special management zone" around Daegu on Friday, which didn't restrict movement of residents or supersede local officials' power but served as official recognition of the problem.

Most of those cases have been linked to a single house of worship, a branch of the Shincheonji Church of Jesus, where a woman in her 60s attended two services before testing positive for the virus.

About 1,000 others who attended services with the woman have been isolated in their homes for screening, and health authorities say they're trying to monitor thousands of other church members.

All 74 sites operated by the Shincheonji Church have been closed and worshipers have been told to instead watch services online for a sect whose leader claims to be an angel of Christ, but who is dismissed by many outsiders as a cult leader. Its teachings revolve largely around the Book of Revelation, a chapter of the New Testament known mostly for its apocalyptic foreshadowing.

Health and city officials say the woman eyed as a potential transmitter at the church had contact with some 1,160 people, both at the church and at a restaurant and a hospital where she was treated for injuries from a car accident. That raised fears that South Korea – which before Wednesday had recorded just 31 cases of the virus – should brace for a further surge.

"I hope South Korea will do everything to contain this outbreak at this early stage," Tedros said.

Usually bustling downtown streets of Daegu were nearly deserted Friday as people wearing face masks lined up at clinics seeking testing. Crowds formed in supermarkets where shelves of ramen and curry were nearly bare. Eight hundred area schools, due to start a new academic year on March 2, delayed their openings by a week.

"Panic is taking hold," said Daegu resident Huh Mi-yeon. "People are scared of any situation where they would run into another person."

Elsewhere in the country, angst grew too. In the capital of Seoul, major downtown rallies were banned, and fears of the virus led many to avoid shops and restaurants and instead eat at home and order necessities online. Buses and subways were full of mask-clad commuters.

The first three cases in the country's 600,000-member military also sprung up on separate bases Friday, bringing added concern. A sailor on Jeju Island and an army officer in North Chungcheong province both tested positive. Both had made recent visits to Daegu, officials said. A third infection was reported in an air force officer who is based in Daegu but who had recently traveled to military headquarters in central South Korea, the defense ministry said, prompting the quarantine of 80 soldiers there.

Even as new alarms were sounded elsewhere in Asia, in China, where the vast majority of cases have occurred, officials have expressed optimism over the number of new infections, which has been trending downward. China said Friday 889 new cases were recorded in the preceding 24 hours and 118 additional deaths.

WHO's Dr. Sylvie Briand said there's no information yet that the virus itself is changing. But she's concerned that there are different patterns of transmission in different parts of the world, what she called "a very different phase of this outbreak depending where you look."

Globally, more than 76,000 people have been infected in 27 countries, and more than 2,200 have died. Italian authorities say the number of people infected has more than quadrupled due to an emerging cluster of cases in the country's north. Many of the new cases represented the first infections in Italy acquired through secondary contagion and brought the country's total to 14 on Friday.

In the United States, 34 people have tested positive for the virus, including 18 who returned home from a quarantined cruise ship in Japan.

The U.S. Department of State is advising citizens to reconsider cruises to or in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific Region. The spread of the virus is causing countries to implement strict screening procedures. The State Department warns that depending on local conditions, passengers could be unable to get off a ship or become subject to quarantine procedures.

Art-glass factory makes pieces infused with cremated remains

By CARSON GERBER
Kokomo Tribune

KOKOMO — Katie Bray has a large paperweight sitting on the nightstand by her bed that always reminds her of her mother, who died in April after a battle with pancreatic cancer.

And the reason the paperweight reminds Bray of her mom is because part of it actually is her mom.

Inside the piece is blue and yellow glass swirling beautifully together. Those colors are complemented by white strands that seem to float inside the paperweight.

It's the white swirls that come from the ashes of Bray's mother after she was cremated.

"I have friends who have vases and urns sitting all around the place, but I wanted something that was a little more beautiful to look at," she said. "I thought this was the best way to preserve some of her ashes. It's there, and something beautiful to look at every day."

The ash-infused paperweight was handcrafted by the renowned glass blowers at Kokomo Opalescent Glass, the oldest art-glass factory in the U.S.

KOG CEO Jeff Shaw said the factory began offering the service to customers about three or four years ago after people started approaching them to see if they could make glass pieces imbued with cremains.

In fact, Shaw said, he didn't even know the factory offered the service when he purchased the factory in 2017.

"I was like, 'Whoa!" he said. "It was a little bit of a surprise. It was a small segment of the business that I wasn't even aware of till I saw it being done."

At first, the factory got a few special orders here and there for the service, but it didn't take long before news spread. More and more requests started to come in, and what started out quietly as a niche product soon caught on as a regular service.

Jeff Simmons, a glassblower at the plant, said today he makes on average three pieces a week infused with cremains, but there have been times where's he done over 10 in a week. About half are made with the ashes of loved ones, and the other half are pets.

On a recent weekday afternoon, Simmons was working on infusing a paperweight with ashes from a family's beloved horse.

After pulling a molten, glowing-red orb from the furnace, Simmons rolled it in the finely sifted ashes of the animal and began to work the cremains in the center of the paperweight. Soon, the cremains swirled inside, encased as silvery white strands that sparkled in the light.

Simmons creates stunning art glass pieces every day in the KOG studio, but he said there's always something special about creating the ash-infused products.

"It's an anonymous sense of honor," he said. "If you can help someone find a rainbow in a storm, it's pretty cool to be a part of that."

For 71-year-old Kokomo native Steve Barker, the paperweight imbued with his wife's ashes is a memorial he wouldn't trade for anything. The two were married for 48 years before she passed away last year after a long battle with Alzheimer's.

Barker said he learned about the cremains service from his kids, and they all ended up getting their own ash-infused paperweight that's also melded with lavender-colored glass.

"Lavender was her favorite color," he said. "It's neat to have her here. It's like part of her is here with us every day."

Shaw said it's amazing the cremains service has become so popular considering the company has never once advertised it. But it makes sense considering more and more people are being cremated, and glass blowing is seeing a kind of popular resurgence, he said. There's even a Netflix show about it.

"We're right in the eye of the storm on this trend," Shaw said. "It's old-world craftsmanship, and it's something different you can do with the ashes to memorialize your loved one, rather than just a box or standard urn. It's something that's a little bit brighter and more positive to remember someone."

And it's more affordable than other options for using cremains, such as turning them into diamonds or jewelry. Shaw said people can get an ash-infused paperweight for around $140. They also can put ashes in glass pendants or beads.

People also have the options of actually creating the pieces themselves. KOG offers classes and allows families or individuals to come with cremains to make paperweights, beads or other objects to house the ashes.

That's what Bray did when her mother passed away in April. She took her two kids to the plant, and they actually helped make the paperweights imbued with the ashes. For Bray's 9-year-old son, who loves glassblowing, it was a deeply meaningful experience.

"It gave us a little bit of closure, seeing her all sealed up in there and knowing she was going to be next to us," Bray said. "It was really great."

Glassblower Simmons said it's that kind of experience that guarantees the cremains service at KOG is only going to get more popular as more people find out about it.

"It's one of those things that if you experience it, it's hard to contain," he said. "You want to tell people."

Mom helps rescue truck driver days after giving birth

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — An Indiana woman who had given birth just a few days earlier said her instincts kicked in when she stopped along a highway to help save a driver who was on fire after his tanker truck loaded with jet fuel burst into flames.

Holly McNally, 35, had just left a hospital's neointensive care unit Thursday afternoon with her mother after they checked in on her son Connor, who was born Monday. They saw the overturned truck and flames along an Interstate 465 bridge that crosses over Interstate 70 on Indianapolis' far east side.

McNally said she slowed her car down and was stunned to see the 59-year-old driver on fire after he managed to get out of the truck on his own.

"People are videotaping and watching, but no one was going over there. So I told my mom 'I'm stopping, I'm going over there,'" McNally told WXIN-TV.

McNally, who has three other children, ages 8, 11 and 15, said that despite the risk to herself, she knew she had to help.

"I guess mom- and gut-instinct. If that were my child or my husband or my family member, I would want somebody to run up if they could," she told The Indianapolis Star.

Running toward the driver, McNally crossed paths with another man who was bringing a blanket to help extinguish the flames and cover the driver, whose clothes had burned off. As they began walking him away from the fire, an explosion rocked the overturned truck, which the driver told them was loaded with 4000 gallons (15,142 litres) of jet fuel.

"We started to go down the embankment a little bit, and I could smell the fluid running past my feet," McNally said. "I'm thinking I'm gonna blow up in an explosion, and not see my baby again."

A second explosion then caused the fire to spread and follow the three of them down the embankment. and the driver, who appeared to be in shock, began to slow down. Luckily, another man ran to the embankment and helped move the driver to safety.

"Without question, those good Samaritans saved this driver's life," Indiana State Police Sgt. John Perrine told The Indianapolis Star.

Another Indiana State Police trooper drove down the highway embankment to meet the three rescuers and the driver. He used clothing from his gym bag to cover the man until emergency medical technicians arrived, Indianapolis Fire Department Battalion Chief Rita Reith said.

The driver remained hospitalized in critical condition Friday morning, Reith said.

Trucking company Jet Star Inc. released a statement Friday, thanking those who helped save the driver, which it identified as Jeffrey "Duke" Denman.

Despite strong start, Buttigieg seeks $13M for Mar. 3

By THOMAS BEAUMONT
Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg says he needs to raise $13 million to stay competitive through the 14-state Super Tuesday contests on March 3, despite strong finishes in the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary.

The tricky financial picture for one of the surprise candidates of 2020 comes as the 38-year-old former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, reported Thursday that he spent more than twice as much as he brought in during January, even as he was simultaneously ramping up for the Iowa and New Hampshire contests.

But the Iowa Democratic Party's debacle in reporting results may have dampened what Buttigieg could have expected to raise immediately after Iowa. Buttigieg ended with a near-tie in Iowa with Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who has fielded a strong organization and fundraising this cycle after competing strongly against Hillary Clinton for the 2016 presidential nomination.

"The Iowa deal took some luster off what would have been a great night and a great week," said Bobby Mandell, a Florida lawyer among Buttigieg's most influential donors. "I know he did fine that week, but not as well as he could have done, had he been able to claim outright victory."

Mandell says he and Buttigieg's donors remain upbeat and committed as the candidate squeezes fundraising events in Nevada ahead of the Saturday caucuses there, and campaign and fundraising jaunts to California, the most delegate-rich prize in the March 3 sweepstakes.

The pace rapidly quickens after Nevada, as Buttigieg races from Nevada to Colorado and Virginia, important Super Tuesday states, before spending most of next week in South Carolina. Buttigieg's campaign in South Carolina must show signs of support from African American voters who make up a majority of that state's Feb. 29 primary electorate.

In the Super Tuesday primaries, Buttigieg faces free-spending billionaire Mike Bloomberg, who did not compete in the first four nominating contests, but has advertised heavily.

No longer fighting solely to distinguish himself chiefly from Sanders, Buttigieg told donors in the $13-million appeal Thursday, "We are now also up against a billionaire who is throwing colossal sums of money on television instead of doing the work of campaigning."

Still, Buttigieg said Thursday he had raised $11 million to date in February, adding to the $6 million in contributions his campaign reported receiving in January. However, Buttigieg spent $14 million in January, an investment he'd hoped would reap heavily from beating expectations in Iowa. He had only $6.6 million in the bank at the end of the month.

The Iowa Democratic Party, which ran the leadoff caucuses, failed to report complete results for three days, the result of a failure of an electronic reporting program as well as other problems. The Associated Press has not yet declared a winner in the contest, which remains under review by state and national party officials.

Buttigieg began his climb into the top tier of the 2020 Democratic field last summer after raising nearly $25 million in the second quarter of 2019, part of a $75-million total he raised last year.

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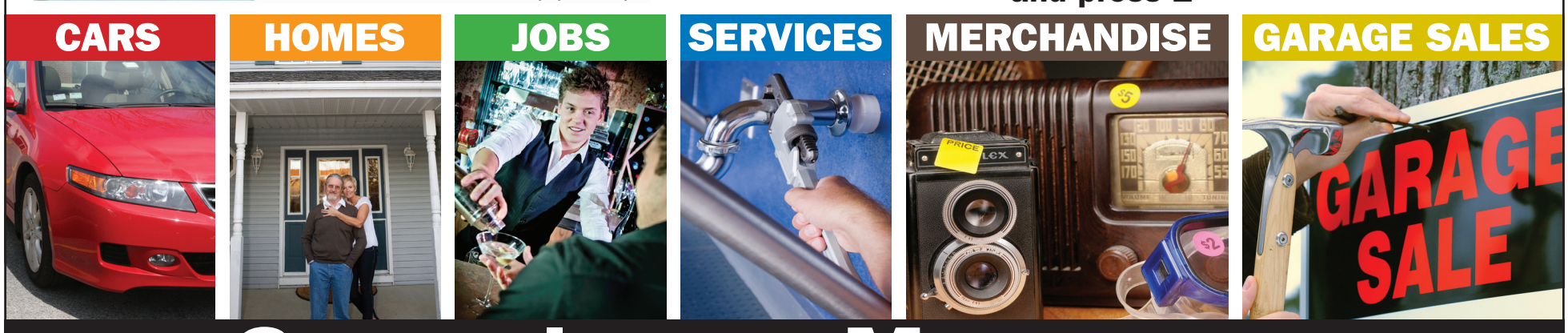

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